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Lyne *Coote*
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T E N T H
R E P O R T

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE.

England - House of Commons [Proceedings - II]



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FROM THE
SELECT COMMITTEE

APPOINTED

To take into Consideration the State of the ADMINISTRATION of JUSTICE in the Provinces of BENGAL, BAHAR, and ORISSA, and to report the same, as it shall appear to them, to the House, with their Observations thereupon;

A N D

Who were instructed to consider how the BRITISH POSSESSIONS in the EAST INDIES may be held and governed with the greatest Security and Advantage to this Country, and by what Means the Happiness of the Native Inhabitants may be best promoted.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRET,
OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE, IN PICCADILLY

MDCCLXXXVI.



INTRODUCTION,

IN the multiplicity of original documents respecting India, care has been taken, from time to time, to select for publication such papers as most directly applied to the respective subjects under immediate investigation.

The following Report * contains a clear and succinct narrative of that part of Mr. Hastings's conduct, which it is generally understood will be the next inquired into, in the approaching session.

Many reasons concur to render the discussion of that Charge most interesting and important. The two cases, namely, that of Benares, already determined, and that of the Resumption of the

* Now first published from the parliamentary copy.

Jaghires, which is next to be agitated, are so intimately connected, that it is scarcely possible to suppose Mr. Pitt will defend the latter, having already condemned the former; but the desperate violence with which the Partisans on the other side menace the overthrow of whatever Minister deserts them on that question, will undoubtedly break the House of Commons into a variety of discordant parties; so that it is far from impossible but this great case will ultimately be decided by the independant part of the House, on the actual merits of the cause. Under these circumstances, it behoves every generous and spirited mind to investigate the evidence with more than usual activity.

The Report now published for that purpose, states the Resumption of the Jaghires to have been a measure suddenly taken up, on the failure of the expected *resources* from Benares. It represents the *accusations* against the devoted families not to have been invented, till after the fatal *sentence* against them had finally passed. It describes the vindictive incitements urged by Mr. Hastings to stimulate the Nabob of Oude to the persecution of his parents, contrary to the pledged

pledged faith of this nation, to support and guarantee their protection. It relates the deplorable situation of these unfortunate Women, who, immured by law and custom, secluded from all possible connection with political concerns, were, notwithstanding, torn from their retirements, and exposed to insult and outrage, on anonymous and contradictory accusations; and debarred from every honour and every decency due to their rank, their elevated birth, and their sex. It exhibits also, a degradation of a very different kind, and one which (if substantiated) calls aloud for exemplary punishment. An Officer of high rank in India in the novel capacity of a Factor of Accusations, posting through Asia to collect Affidavits In short, there are the same leading features in the Benares and the Begum Charges—the same spirit of gigantic oppression, of arbitrary coercion, of cool and callous severity, of insolent and imperious contumely, equally pervade and characterise both of these disgraceful transactions; but in the latter our national honour is sullied by a direct and daring violation of Public Faith, on which last ground the peculiar expediency of national exoneration from that basest offence, may
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at this particular crisis appear most indispensibly necessary ; unless while we are boasting of new leagues of peace and commerce, we think it prudent that in every sense the negotiation of Compacts should commence and proceed by selections of private treachery, and sanctions to public fraud.

T E N T H
R E P O R T
FROM THE
S E L E C T C O M M I T T E E

Appointed to take into Consideration the State of the Administration of Justice in the Provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and to report the same, as it shall appear to them, to the House, with their Observations thereupon; and who were instructed to consider how the British Possessions in the East Indies may be held and governed with the greatest Security and Advantage to this Country, and by what Means the Happiness of the Native Inhabitants may be best promoted.

THE House having, in the last Session of Parliament, passed fundry resolutions relative to the strict observance of treaties with Indian powers, your Committee have brought before the House in this Session, more than one instance of the breach of public faith. The Governor General of Bengal appears to

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have

have acted on principles very opposite to the sense of this House, when they declare “ That the maintenance
 “ of an inviolable character for moderation, good faith,
 “ and scrupulous regard to treaty, ought to have been
 “ the simple grounds on which the British Govern-
 “ ments should have endeavoured to establish an in-
 “ fluence, superior to that of other Europeans, over
 “ the minds of the native powers in India ; and that
 “ the danger and discredit arising from the forfeiture
 “ of this pre-eminence could not be compensated by
 “ the temporary success of any plan of violence or
 “ injustice.”

With such a resolution before them, your Committee considered it as their indispensable duty, to enter into an investigation of the causes assigned by the Governor General for a breach of the public faith of the Company, pledged by him and the Council General in the most solemn manner, for the protection of the widow of the late Vizier Sujah Dowlah, a woman of the first distinction, by birth and rank, in the empire of Hindostan.

It appears to your Committee, that in the year 1775 the Begum or widow of the late Vizier Sujah Dowlah, and who is the mother of the present Vizier Azoph ul Dowlah, having great reason to be dissatisfied with the conduct of her Son towards her, applied to the Council General of Calcutta for protection.

The following extract from her letter to the Governor General, is worthy of remark : “ I went to the
 “ Nabob when the hour of his death approached, and
 “ asked him to whose charge ~~he~~ left me ? he replied,
 “ Apply to Mr. Hastings whenever you have occasion
 “ for assistance ; he will befriend you when I am no
 “ more

“ more, and will comply with whatever you may desire of him.”

The negotiation was concluded by the Begum agreeing to release her Son from all claims upon account of a sum of near £. 290,000, which she had already advanced to enable him to discharge the arrears of his army, and to fulfil his engagements to the English Company; and she also engaged, in compliance with the solicitations of the English Resident and the Nabob's Ministers, to make a further advance of £. 340,000, to be applied to the exigences of the State (of which the Company's demand was the principal) on condition that she should be guaranteed by the Company in the full and quiet enjoyment of her estates, effects, and jaghires; that no further demands of money, on any pretence whatsoever, should again be made on her; and that, if she thought it necessary to quit the dominions of her Son, and to go on a pilgrimage, she should have liberty to leave her jaghires under the charge of whomsoever she pleased, and the person so left was to receive assistance and protection.

To these terms her Son the Vizier acceded by a formal agreement, sanctified by an oath. The Begum performed her part by paying the money, and the Council General of Bengal guaranteed the due observance of this Family Compact.

The public faith of the nation being thus solemnly pledged for the protection of the estates, effects, and jaghires of the Begum, she continued to reside, under that protection, at her Palace at Fyzabad, in the Province of Oude, until the 12th of January 1782. Not indeed in the unmolested enjoyment of her rights; for your Committee observe, that so early as January 1778, the English Resident, Mr. Middleton, makes very

strong representations to the Governor General and Council, of the Vizier's treatment of his grandmother. She complained to the Resident of his behaviour to her in very strong and pointed terms, and felt so much disquiet from it, that she determined immediately to carry into execution a design, which she had formed some years since, of performing a pilgrimage to Mecca. She had taken final leave of the Vizier's family, and the 24th of that month had been fixed for her departure. Mr. Middleton prevailed on her to suspend her resolution for three weeks, and to deliver to him a writing, the substance of her expectation from the Vizier, and of the services which she expected from himself. Having received these papers, he transmitted them immediately to Calcutta, with his own remarks upon them; and he strongly represented to the Board, the necessity of an immediate exertion of their influence to protect the grandmother in whatever they may consider as her rights.

Your Committee observe, that on the 3d of February following, Mr. Middleton writes to the Council, that he had received a long letter from the Bow Begum, mother of the Vizier, in which she demands the protection of the British Government, to restore and confirm her rights. She makes this claim by virtue of the treaty subsisting betwixt the Vizir and her, of which the English were guarantee; she transmits him not only a copy of that treaty, but a particular account of her several claims and requisitions. These papers the Resident also transmits to the Governor General and Council, with his own observations on each article.

It is necessary that your Committee should remark, that neither the claims and requisitions, or the Resident's

sident's observations, are to be found at the India House.

He writes in the above letter, that as most of these claims were expressed in the Treaty before mentioned, he did not suppose the Nabob would have hesitated to have complied with them, and therefore did not think it necessary to take up the attention of the Board on a matter which had been so particularly discussed and settled, and which, after such solemn engagements on the part of the Nabob, the Council would hardly expect could at this time become a subject of dispute. He adds, that the Vizier, however, has declined complying with them.

Your Committee observe, that the Council General, on the 23d of March, 1778, took under their consideration the several letters of the Resident, concerning the Vizier's treatment of his mother and grandmother; and your Committee think it their indispensable duty to state at large to the House, what were the sentiments of the Council General, then consisting of Mr. Hastings, Mr. Barwell, Mr. Francis, and Mr. Wheeler, not only of the Vizier's treatment of the two Begums, but of the degree of protection which it was their duty to extend to them.

In a letter to the Resident, Mr. Middleton, they write,

“ We have duly considered your letters of the 25th
 “ and 27th January, and 2d and 3d February, on the
 “ subject of the complaints and requisitions of the old
 “ Begum and Bow Begum.

“ We can have no right to interfere between the
 “ Vizier and his relations or subjects, for the redress
 “ of any grievances which they may sustain from him,
 “ except by remonstrance, or in cases that we should
 “ deem

“ deem of a nature so gross and enormous as to cast a
 “ reproach on the Company, and to involve and affect
 “ the dignity of the British name, by withdrawing
 “ ourselves from such a dishonourable connection ; we
 “ must therefore decline giving you authority at pre-
 “ sent to insist on the Nabob’s immediate restitution
 “ of the property claimed by the old Begum, and by
 “ the family of the Nabob Sheer Jung, deceased ; but
 “ as we approve of the means you have taken to con-
 “ ciliate the differences that have arisen with the for-
 “ mer, and dissuade the Nabob from the act of op-
 “ pression which he intended to commit on the estate
 “ of the latter, *we desire you will repeat your remon-*
 “ *strances to the Vizier on both these points, in the*
 “ *name of this Government ; representing to him the*
 “ *consequences of such an arbitrary proceeding ; the re-*
 “ *proach to which his honour and reputation, as well as*
 “ *ours, from being connected with him, will be exposed*
 “ *by such acts of cruelty and injustice ; and the right*
 “ *which we derive from the nature of our alliance with*
 “ *him, to expect that he will pay a deference to our*
 “ *remonstrances.*

“ If he shall persist in his refusal, after this, to agree
 “ to any reasonable terms, you are to take no further
 “ steps till you have advised us thereof, and of every
 “ circumstance attending it, that we may give you our
 “ final orders for your guidance.

“ Having given the old Begum such a proof of our
 “ desire to assist her, and to obtain security for her in
 “ her present situation, we hope she will be satisfied
 “ to continue where she is, as we can by no means
 “ encourage her wish *to remove with the personal*
 “ *wealth from the Nabob’s dominions.*

“ With

“ With respect to the Bow Begum, her grievances
 “ come before us on a very different footing: *She is*
 “ *entitled to our protection by an Act, not sought by us,*
 “ *but solicited by the Nabob himself, and granted in*
 “ *compliance with his and her request; we therefore im-*
 “ *power and direct you to afford your support and pro-*
 “ *tection to her, in the due maintenance of all the rights*
 “ *she possess in virtue of the Treaty executed between*
 “ *her and her Son, under the guarantee of the Company;*
 “ *and against every attempt that may be, directly or in-*
 “ *directly, made to infringe them: At the same time that*
 “ *we recommend the greatest delicacy to you in every*
 “ *case of this nature, we desire that you will act with*
 “ *firmness and resolution, and, as far as you can, with*
 “ *effect.*”

As there does not appear amongst the records at the India House, any answer from Mr. Middleton to this letter, nor that any further proceedings were held at that time on this subject, your Committee are inclined to suppose, that the representations of the Council General then produced their proper effect on the mind of the Vizier.

It appears that in May, 1781, when the Governor General had resolved to proceed from Calcutta to Benares and the Vizier's Court, the Council General consisted of himself and Mr. Wheeler, Sir Eyre Coote the Commander in Chief being absent on service.

The powers granted to the Governor General by the Council, in July 1781, are entered at large in the Appendix to the Supplement of the 2d Report, with the observations that it was a delegation of authority beyond all precedent. The Governor General soon after left Calcutta, and proceeded to Benares.

In

In the last Session of Parliament your Committee laid before the House, a report on the expulsion of Cheyt Sing, Rajah of Benares and Gazipoor, from his territories; and it has been stated, that since this report was made, that the Governor General had transmitted a Narrative, containing his defence of that measure.—The Supplement to the Second Report contains the observations of your Committee upon that Narrative, so far as regards the supposed misconduct or criminality of Cheyt Sing, and the Governor General's proceedings thereon.

It appears to your Committee, that some of the reasons assigned by the Governor General in that Narrative, for his conduct towards Cheyt Sing, seems to have operated with equal force on his mind, when he carried into execution those very extraordinary measures which he had planned against the Begums.

For the Governor General in his Narrative says, “ That he was determined to draw from the guilt of the Rajah, the means of relief to the Company’s distresses, and to exact a penalty which he was convinced the Rajah was very well able to bear, from a fund which he was also convinced the Rajah had destined for purposes of the most dangerous tendency to the Company’s dominions.” He concludes, “ In a word I had determined to make him pay largely for his pardon, or to exact a severe vengeance for his past delinquency.”

In another part of his Narrative he thus writes, “ I will suppose for a moment that I have erred, that I have acted with an unwarranted rigour towards Cheyt Sing, and even with injustice:—Let my motive be consulted; I left Calcutta impressed with a belief that extraordinary means are necessary, and those

“ those exerted with a strong hand, to preserve the
 “ Company’s interest from sinking under the accumu-
 “ lated weight which oppressed them; I saw a political
 “ necessity for curbing the overgrown power of a great
 “ member of their dominion; and for making it con-
 “ tribute to the relief of their pressing exigencies.”

When the Governor General entreated Mr. Wheler to give his formal and circumstantial attestation to a conversation which passed between them on the eve of his departure from Calcutta to Benares, Mr. Wheler made the following minute in Council: “ I well
 “ remember, that on the eve of the Governor Ge-
 “ neral’s departure from Calcutta, the conduct of
 “ Cheyt Sing, late Rajah of Benares, was a principal
 “ subject of a confidential discourse between us; that
 “ he bespoke my support of the measures which he
 “ intended to pursue towards him.

“ The Rajah’s offences were declared to require an
 “ early punishment; and as his wealth was great, and
 “ the Company’s exigencies pressing, it was thought
 “ a measure of policy and justice to exact from him a
 “ large pecuniary mulct for their relief. The sum to
 “ which the Governor declared his resolution to ex-
 “ tend this fine, was forty or fifty lacks: His ability
 “ to pay it was stated as a fact that would not admit
 “ of a doubt; and the two alternatives on which the
 “ Governor General declared himself to have resolved,
 “ if Cheyt Sing refused to comply with this requisi-
 “ tion, were, to the best of my remembrance, either
 “ a removal from his Zemindary entirely; or, by
 “ taking possession of his forts, to obtain, out of the
 “ treasure deposited in them, the above sum for the
 “ Company.”

It has been stated, that the Rajah of Benares having been put under an arrest by the Governor General, and having escaped from that arrest, sought for security in his fortresses; pursued thither by the Company's troops, he was obliged to quit his strong holds, to abandon his dominions, and seek protection with the Maratta Chief, Madajee Scindia.

The Governor General states, that Rajah Cheyt Sing carried a considerable part of his treasure with him; the remainder was deposited in his fortress of Bidjegur; and when this place surrendered upon articles of capitulation to the Company's troops, the treasure found there was claimed by the captors as their right.

The Governor General found himself disappointed in his expectations of drawing relief to the Company's distresses; for he discovered that he had not the means of exacting a penalty of forty or fifty lacks of rupees, as a pecuniary mulct, from Cheyt Sing; and that although in possession of his forts, he had but little authority over the property found in them; for the officers on this service, authorized, as they conceived, by two letters from the Governor General to their Commanding Officer, Major Popham, made an immediate division of prize money amongst that detachment of the army who were actually employed in the reduction of Bidjegur. The Governor General was then at Chunargur, which is only one day's post from Bidjegur. As soon as he had received advice of the division of the treasure, he wrote to Major Popham a third letter; in which, notwithstanding the positive declaration of the right of the captors in his former letters, yet in this he states, that "by Charters and
" Acts

“ Acts of Parliament the sole right to all conquests
 “ and captures made by the Company’s arms, is vested
 “ in the Company.” In another part of his letter
 he adds, “ besides, if the actual right was in the
 “ army, at a time like this, when the exigencies of
 “ of the Company are so great, surely they might have
 “ expected to have benefited by the immediate use of
 “ it as a loan. I had, I must own, such confidence
 “ in your discretion, that I did expect, that if the
 “ treasure found in the fort should prove very con-
 “ siderable, you would not have proceeded to any
 “ distribution of it until you had reported the amount
 “ to the Board, and obtained their sanction for appro-
 “ priating it to the troops ; or at least that you would
 “ have represented it to me, as I am so near you.”

Your Committee, in order to give the House com-
 plete information on this point, have given full ex-
 tracts from the Governor General’s three letters to
 Major Popham, on the subject of Prize Money ; and
 they have also inserted extracts from the Governor
 General’s letters to Colonel Champion, who com-
 manded the army in Bengal in 1774, on a similar
 subject. And your Committee cannot avoid remark-
 ing, that the opinion of the Governor General given
 in 1774, and that given in 1781, are directly opposite ;
 and also, that there is not the most perfect concord-
 ance in his several letters to Major Popham on this
 subject. Your Committee have also added extracts
 from the proceedings of a Committee of Officers, as-
 sembled on the 11th of November 1781, at Bidjegur,
 for the distribution of the money and effects taken in
 that fortress ; as also the proceedings of the Governor
 General and Council upon the same subject, after the
 return of Mr. Hastings to Calcutta,

Your Committee observe, that neither the Governor General's declaration of an intention to have used his utmost authority and influence to obtain for the troops engaged in the service against Cheyt Sing, the whole booty which might be found in Bidjegur, or other places; nor his prediction, that if they persisted to decide by their own authority, on the claims of the captors, they would withdraw the question from their own immediate Government, to make it a national concern, did prevail on the Officers to refund what they had already divided amongst the detachment, amounting to near £. 250,000 sterling; but they consented to postpone the partition of the remainder until some new claims had been decided by a Committee of Officers, to sit at Calcutta for that purpose. But, independent of the Governor General's opinion, which they understood to be in their favour, they believed, that not a doubt existed of the validity of their pretensions to whatever was taken (military stores excepted.)

The expected relief from Cheyt Sing's treasures having failed; and the Governor General having declared, that the Company's interest could only be preserved from sinking under the accumulated weight which oppressed them, by the exertion, with a strong hand, of some extraordinary means; he appears to have selected a new object for this exertion.

It does not appear either by a minute delivered in Council (the usual mode of recording opinions) or by any previous conversation with Mr. Wheeler (as happened on the subject of Cheyt Sing) that the Governor General, before he left Calcutta, had any intentions to violate the Treaty between the Nabob and his

his mother, of which the British Government was the guarantee.

Your Committee find, that on the 11th September, the Governor General and the Vizier had a meeting near Chunar; and that on the 19th September, articles of agreement were concluded between them.

The Governor General has stated his own motives for acceding to the several articles of this agreement, in a very full and ample manner; but as the second article, and the consequences which resulted from carrying that article into execution, are the immediate subjects of this Report, your Committee have thought it proper in this place to insert the Nabob's representations, and the Governor General's requisitions, with the second article of the agreement. The Governor General's remarks on that article, together with objections, that he says may be urged, and his own refutation of those objections, are as follow:

“ The Nabob Vizier ul Mummalie Afoph ul Dow-
 “ lah, Afoph Jaw Cawn Behadre, having repeatedly
 “ and urgently represented, that he is unable to support
 “ the expence of the temporary brigade cavalry and
 “ English Officers with their battalions, as well as
 “ other gentlemen, who are now paid by him under
 “ the denomination of Sebundy, &c. &c. and hav-
 “ ing made sundry requests to that and other purposes,
 “ and as the constancy and firmness of his alliance
 “ with the Company entitle him to every considera-
 “ tion and relief that may depend upon us, I, War-
 “ ren Hastings, Governor General, Imadut Dowlah
 “ Jelladit Jung Behadre, &c. &c. on behalf of the
 “ Governor General and Council, have agreed to the
 “ undermentioned articles, this 19th day of Septem-
 “ ber, in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Seven
 “ Hundred

“ Hundred and Eighty-one, corresponding to the last
 “ of Ramgan, 1195 of the Hidjeree.

“ 1st, That the temporary brigade and three re-
 “ giments of cavalry be no longer charged to the
 “ Nabob's account for the year Fuffullee 1189, ex-
 “ cepting a term of two and an half months, which is
 “ required for their passing the Nabob's boundaries,
 “ and for which, together with all former arrears,
 “ their usual pay and allowances are to be made good;
 “ also the English Officers with their Sebundy bat-
 “ talions and other Gentlemen, excepting the Resi-
 “ dent's Office, now upon the Nabob's list, be no
 “ longer at his charge for the year 1189, the arrears
 “ being paid up, with the addition of two months
 “ allowances; The true meaning of this being, that
 “ no more troops be paid for by the Nabob, than the
 “ number of European Artillery and Sepoys agreed
 “ for, under title of One Brigade, with the late
 “ Nabob Sujah ul Dowlah, now paid for at the rate
 “ of 2,60,000 rupees per month; to which is now to
 “ be added one regiment of Sepoys of the present
 “ establishment, expressly allowed for the purpose of
 “ protecting the Office, Treasury, and Person of the
 “ Resident at Lucknow, the pay and allowances of
 “ which are to commence from the 1st of August
 “ next, at the rate of rupees 25,000 per month; the
 “ regiment to be relieved every three months; the
 “ brigade to be stationed or moved wherever the
 “ Nabob shall direct, in the mode prescribed in the
 “ former Treaty with the Nabob Vizier, deceased;
 “ and finally, that whenever the Nabob Vizier shall
 “ require a further aid of troops from the Company,
 “ the pay and allowances shall commence from the
 “ day of their passing the Caramnassa,

“ Also

“ Also, should the assistance of the Nabob’s troops
 “ be required by the Company, their pay and allow-
 “ ances, as may then be agreed upon, be allowed dur-
 “ ing the term they may serve.

“ 2dly, That as great distress has arisen to the Na-
 “ bob’s Government from the military power and do-
 “ minion assumed by the Jaghiredars, he may be per-
 “ mitted to resume such as he may find necessary;
 “ with a reserve, that all such for the amount of whose
 “ jaghires the Company are guarantees, shall, in case
 “ of the resumption of their lands, be paid the amount
 “ of their net collections, through the Resident, in
 “ ready money.

“ 3dly, That as Fyzoolah Khan has, by his breach
 “ of treaty, forfeited the protection of the English
 “ Government, and causes, by his continuance in his
 “ present independent state, great alarm and detri-
 “ ment to the Nabob, he be permitted, when time
 “ shall suit, to resume his lands; and pay him in mo-
 “ ney, through the Resident, the amount stipulated
 “ by treaty, after deducting the amount and charges
 “ of the troops he stands engaged to furnish by
 “ Treaty; which amount shall be passed to the ac-
 “ count of the Company during the continuance of
 “ the present war.

“ 4thly, That an English Resident be appointed
 “ to Furruckabad, and the present one recalled.

“ 5thly, That the treaties made between the Eng-
 “ lish and the Nabob Sujah ul Dowlah be ratified
 “ between the present parties, as far as may be con-
 “ sistent with the abovementioned articles; and that no
 “ officers, troops, or others, be put upon the Nabob’s
 “ establishment, exclusive of those herein stipulated.

“ (Signed) Warren Hastings. (L. S.)”
 The

The Governor General made the following requisition to the Nabob :

“ Having, in my behalf, agreed to the requisitions
 “ of the Nabob Vizier, without diminution or reserve,
 “ I must now repeat the request which I before verbally made to him, that he will be pleased to attend
 “ to such proposals as I shall have to make to him;
 “ and to these I expect his assent the more readily, as
 “ they have, for their ultimate object, his interest alone; that of the Company being no further concerned than in the influence which they will eventually have in the payment of the debt due from
 “ the Nabob to the Company.

“ I therefore recommend to him to reduce the great
 “ number of his Sebundy, and other troops, to regular and complete establishment; not to be paid
 “ by assignments of revenue, but in money from the Treasury, and their number not to exceed the certain means of paying them: But as this may be
 “ difficult, without making a separation of the Nabob’s public and private funds, I further recommend, that
 “ he receive into his private purse no more than a fixed monthly sum for the expences of his person
 “ and household; and that the remainder of the net collections to be left in a public Treasury, under the
 “ management of his public Ministers, and the inspection of the Resident, for the discharge of his military
 “ and civil disbursements.

“ This advice is not meant to affect the assignments annually, and which must be annually renewed for
 “ the payment of the past debt, and the current demands of the Company.”

Signed and sealed by the Nabob accepting and promising to conform to the above advice.

Article

Article 2d.

" That as great distress
 " has arisen to the
 " Nabob's Government,
 " from the military
 " power and dominion
 " assumed by the Jag-
 " hiredars, he be permit-
 " ted to resume such as
 " he may find necessary ;
 " with a reserve, that all
 " such for the amount
 " of whose jaghires the
 " Company are guaran-
 " tees, shall, in case of
 " the resumption of their
 " lands, be paid the a-
 " mount of their net col-
 " lections, through the
 " Resident, in ready
 " money."

Article 2d.

" The mischief to which
 " the Nabob is exposed,
 " from permitting a num-
 " ber of rich independent
 " estates, supporting a body
 " of military tenants, to be
 " maintained in the heart
 " of the country, are of the
 " same nature which we
 " have recently experienced
 " from the enormous wealth
 " and influence of Rajah
 " Cheyt Sing; and in fact
 " the Nabob did experi-
 " ence them also, and at
 " the same time, and from
 " the same causes. The
 " jaghires possessed by the
 " Begums, have enabled
 " them to give frequent
 " disturbance to the Na-
 " bob's Government; and
 " it can be well attested,
 " that they principally ex-
 " cited and supported the
 " late commotions in Gur-
 " ruckpore, &c. in concert
 " with Cheyt Sing; and that
 " they carried their inve-
 " teracy to the Nabob, and
 " to the English nation, so
 " far, as to aim at our ex-
 " tirpation.

" tirpation. By a disposi-
 " tion so malignant, and a
 " conduct so offensive, and
 " even dangerous to our ex-
 " istence, as have been ma-
 " nifested by the Begums,
 " without the smallest inju-
 " ry or provocation on our
 " parts, they have forfeited
 " all claim to that protec-
 " tion which we afforded
 " them, in exacting from
 " the Nabob, at the time
 " Mr. Bristow assisted him
 " in obtaining thirty lacks
 " of rupees from them, on
 " a promise to our Govern-
 " ment that these ladies
 " should enjoy full posses-
 " sion of their jaghires un-
 " molested. We have a
 " right to withdraw this
 " protection when they are
 " no longer worthy of it,
 " and to provide against
 " their machinations by a
 " concession of that pledge
 " which afforded them the
 " means of injuring and
 " distressing us.

" The Begums will suffer
 " no actual loss by the re-
 " sumption of the jaghires,
 " except of an influence
 " which

" which they have invari-
 " ably employed to the
 " most pernicious purposes,
 " against one State which
 " conferred, and another
 " which secured and pro-
 " tected them; since it is
 " stipulated that they shall
 " receive the amount of the
 " next collections of them
 " in money, by the hands
 " of our Resident.

" These agreements will
 " apply to the situation of
 " all the other Jaghiredars,
 " though they may not to
 " their actual conduct or
 " dispositions; but as we
 " are neither engaged for
 " their possessions, nor have
 " any immediate connec-
 " tion with them, the Na-
 " bob should be left to the
 " exercise of his own au-
 " thority and pleasure re-
 " specting them."

To which remarks the Governor General added :
 " I think it therefore not sufficient to have displayed
 " the motives of my conduct, and the good which
 " may result from it, but shall proceed to state all the
 " objections which may be made to it, with my answer
 " to each. Even this precaution is liable to the pe-
 " culiar objection, to the charge of a consciousness of

" error, too readily anticipating the imputation of it,
 " and implying its existence ; And it will be said, on
 " this, as it has been said on a thousand similar oc-
 " casions, that the defects which I have thus supposed,
 " must have had some ground for them, or they would
 " not have occurred as such to myself, against any act
 " of my own, nor excited so uncommon an eagerness
 " to refute them. To this I reply, that there is no
 " proposition which the wit of man can devise, which
 " the wit of man cannot find plausible and perhaps even
 " just cause to censure, by a false and partial review
 " of it ; and I, of all men, may be allowed to dread
 " this treatment, after having invariably experienced
 " it in every instance of my public life.

" I shall proceed, as above, to state the objections
 " in one column, and the answers to them in the
 " opposite.

" Few objections can be
 " made to the second arti-
 " cle : It may be suggested,
 " 1st, That it will excite
 " clamour and discontent,
 " which, in the present time,
 " may be dangerous ; and
 " 2dly, That it will be,
 " in a principle instance, a
 " breach of our faith, which
 " is pledged to guarantee a
 " treaty concluded, through
 " the the means of Mr.
 " Bristow, between the Na-
 " bob Vizier, and of re-
 " moving all check to his
 " oppressions."

" 2d. No effects of any
 " additional clamour, ex-
 " cited by the resumption
 " of the jaghires, could
 " exceed those of their
 " actual defection ; and
 " the Begum herself had
 " forfeited all pretension
 " to the benefit of the
 " Treaty executed for her
 " behalf, by having been
 " the first mover and most
 " busy actor of the sedi-
 " tion."

And

And your Committee find, that by a letter of the 23d September, 1781, the Governor General informs Mr. Middleton, the British Resident with the Nabob Vizier, "That having entered into certain engagements with the Vizier, tending to relieve his finances of a burthen they were no longer able to sustain, with sundry other clauses, the execution of which was entrusted to him, he therewith enclosed a copy of the same for his guidance."

The remarks of the Governor General on the article relative to the Begums, and the motives which he assigns for his conduct, will be considered hereafter; in this place the Committee will only observe, that to form a just judgment of the proceedings towards the Begums, it will be necessary to pay particular attention to dates.

It has been reported by your Committee, that Cheyt Sing, Rajah of Benares, was put in arrest by the Governor General on the 16th day of August; and the commotions in the Vizier's country are stated to have commenced about the 8th day of September.

Your Committee also find a letter from the Governor General to Mr. Wheeler, on the 11th of September; in which he tells him, "not to doubt of speedy success, as the Rajah had made repeated overtures for peace; less humble in terms than in the mode; but that he declined to answer him, or even to temporize, for the example was dangerous, and ought, even with hazard, to be checked in the first instance." He concludes this letter with assuring him, "that all will end happily." And on the 18th of September he writes, "That the Province of Oude had caught the contagion, but that he should dismiss the Nabob in a few days, and doubted not but his

“ his troubles would soon be quelled:” he adds, “ That he gave his sole attention to the present object (the reduction of Cheyt Sing) *which accomplished, every other would follow;*” and further adds, “ Believe no report.”

Although it appears that the Governor General knew of the commotion in the Province of Oude on the 18th of September, yet he was not *then* under the smallest apprehension for the consequences; nor does his letter of that date from Chunar, to the Council of Calcutta, convey any imputation on the conduct of the Begums.

Several letters appear to have been received by the Council General of Calcutt, in September, October, and November, from the Governor General; yet no complaint was yet urged against the Begums until the 29th of November, when the Governor General transmitted a copy of the agreement which he had entered into with the Vizier on the 19th of September, ten weeks after he had concluded it.

The letter from the Governor General to Mr. Wheeler and Council, of the 29th September, from Benares, renders this silence respecting the Begums still more remarkable. In that letter he mentions having, in various and successive letters, informed him of his transactions and occurrences which had befallen him since his departure from Calcutta, especially since his arrival at that place the 14th of last month; that it was his intention to employ the first hours of his leisure in drawing up a detailed narrative of the latter for his information. In the mean time he should continue to advise him, from time to time, of such circumstances of moment as occur in the course of daily business, both for his information, and for the means of obtaining

ing his sentiments upon them for his assistance and guidance.

The Governor General's instructions from the Council General, do not give him any authority to withdraw the Company's guarantee from the Begums.

The public safety did not require any instant decision; for tranquility had been restored some weeks before the 24th December, the date of his letter to the Resident, and which letter empowered him to commence hostilities against these ladies. Therefore, according to the established rules and customs of the service, and also to the declaration, before mentioned, of the Governor General, if he had any solid grounds to impeach the conduct of the Begums, protected by our guarantee, before he proceeded to any measures contradictory to the public engagement, it was his duty to have communicated those grounds to the Council, not only for their information, but that he might receive their instructions for his future guidance; more especially as Mr. John Mac Pheron, who had been appointed a Member of the Supreme Council had arrived at Bengal in the latter end of September, 1781, and of course could not have concurred in the powers which were granted to the Governor General when he went to Benares.

Your Committee observe, that, in the letter of the 29th of November, the Governor General bestows very high encomiums upon the uncommon instance of fidelity and attachment which the Nabob Vizier had recently shewn to our Government; and yet in that letter, the conduct of the Begums remains unimpeached. Your Committee remark, that the second article of that agreement with the Vizier, grants to him the general power of resumption of such jaghires

as he may find necessary, with a proviso, that those jaghiredars who were guaranteed by the Company, should receive their net collections from the Resident; but the jaghires of the Begums are not specifically mentioned or described to be objects on which this agreement is to operate, nor are the names of the Begums mentioned in it; yet your Committee find, that the Governor General, in his remarks upon this article, and which accompanied it to Calcutta, now, for the first time, transmits his accusations against those ladies; accusations which contained matter of the most serious nature. He states, "That they principally
 " excited and supported the late commotions in Gur-
 " ruckpore, &c. in concert with Cheyt Sing, and
 " that they carried their inveteracy against the Nabob,
 " their Son and Grandson, and the English nation, so
 " far as to aim at our utter extirpation."

But it is worthy of observation, that when the Governor General wrote these remarks, he did not state, that the Begums ought to be deprived of their jaghires, *but only of the influence which arose from having the government of those districts; and that the Begums would suffer no actual loss by the resumption, except of an influence which they had invariably employed for the most pernicious purposes, against one State which conferred, and another which secured and protected them*, because it was stipulated, that the amount of the net collections should be paid to them, through our Resident, in ready money.

Your Committee must observe, that the agreement with the Vizier, concerning the general resumption of jaghires was made on the 19th of September, the Vizier being then on a visit to the Governor General at Chunargur

At the latter end of the month he returned towards his capital. The Governor General expected that he would immediately have entered into the execution of the measures necessary for the accomplishment of the plan they had mutually agreed upon, and particularly the resumption of the jaghires, as an act equally necessary to the restoration of peace, and to the discharge of his debts to the Company; but after having long waited, and with much impatience, for this effect, he was apprised by the Resident, that the Nabob, from what cause he knows not, had shewn a great reluctance to enter on this business.

The Governor General had received some alarm from the delays and difficulties which had attended this business, and which did not appear to him of a nature susceptible of them; he wrote to the English Resident, in December 1781, to declare to him solemnly whether he found himself competent to carry the Governor General's instructions into execution; if not the Governor General intended to proceed to Lucknow, *and afford the Nabob any personal assistance for carrying them into execution.*

The English Resident found himself fully competent to undertake to effect the accomplishment of all the measures required by the Governor General's instructions; and that he should immediately march with the Nabob to Fyzabad, for the purpose of enforcing his claims on the Begums.

Your Committee will now observe upon the events that happened subsequent to the 29th of November:

The first information which the Governor General conveyed to the Council, of the intention to seize the Begum's jaghire, is contained in a copy of his letter to the Resident at Oude, dated the 24th of December.

E

By

By the advices of the Resident of the 19th of December to the Governor General, it is stated, That the Vizier having appointed an Aumil to take charge of the Begum's jaghires she had, it is said, prepared a large body of troops, with a supposed design to resist him; that she had wrote him (the Resident) such a letter as left him no doubt of her intentions to support her servants in opposition to the orders of the Nabob (which letter does not appear upon record) and that he had therefore made use of the authority granted him by the Governor General in his instructions of the 23d of September, to solicit, in his own and the Vizier's name, a regiment of Sepoys from Colonel Morgan, who then commanded in that Province, to support the Nabob's officers in the execution of his commands. The Resident expresses some apprehension, that he should be in want of further aid before the resumption of the jaghires shall be fully established, and tranquillity restored.

The Governor General judged it improper to expose a service of such importance either to the hazard of defeat, or the chance of a delay; and, instead of one regiment, as required by the Resident, he directed Colonel Morgan to detach Sir John Cuming with four regiments, and a proper field train, in order to support the authority of the Vizier, and maintain the tranquillity of his country, by such means as *his Excellency should direct*. He ordered Colonel Morgan also to hold the rest of the troops in readiness for marching at the shortest notice.

The Governor General advised the Resident of having ordered this force to assist the Vizier; but the Resident was apprehensive that the Vizier would object to the movement of so large a body of troops into the heart of

of his dominions, without what he would deem an adequate occasion for it, and ascribe it to other motives, which might be productive of consequences hurtful to our connection with him : He requested the Governor General to suspend the march of Sir John Cuming's detachment, with assurances, that there was no pressing occasion for the measure ; and the march of the detachment was countermanded.

Mr. Middleton, the Resident, in his letter of the 13th of January, 1782, states the Nabob's reluctance in rather stronger terms ; he writes, " That finding
" the temporizing and indecisive conduct of the Nabob
" seemed to promise an issue very different from that
" expected by the Governor General, in his letter of
" the 25th of December last ; and that the only use
" the two leading Eunuchs of the Bhow Begum made
" of the delay, was, to assemble and call in armed
" men from all quarters, that he found himself necessi-
" tated to take the most immediate and decisive in-
" terference, which the force with him was capable
" of ; and accordingly, having the Nabob's written
" requisition, he marched the 23d regiment of Sepoys
" against the Kellah (the residence of the Begum) and
" put the Nabob's party in possession of it without
" bloodshed."

In this place your Committee must observe, that the English Resident, Mr. Middleton, condemns the temporizing and indecisive conduct of the Nabob towards his own parents ; *he is apprehensive that such a conduct would produce an issue very different from that which was expected by the Governor General ;* he therefore obtains from the Nabob a written requisition, and proceeds to act with instant decision.

How far a written *requisition* from the Nabob of Oude can be considered as an authority to justify such transactions, will appear by consulting the letter of instructions from the Governor General to the Resident, of the 23d of September, 1781. In that letter the Governor General assumes the command of the Nabob's Treasury, controls his receipts and expenditures; appoints the forms and manner of receipts and issues; limits the Nabob's personal expences; gives the sole management and control to the Nabob's Minister, with the concurrence of the Resident; directs what troops are to be reformed, and in what manner the Nabob's army is to be paid in future; grants to the Resident a power to remonstrate against the appointment of any Commanders of the Nabob's army, that he (the Resident) should think proper, or of known disaffection to our Government, with an authority to oppose all such appointments of the Nabob, should he persist in making them,

Your Committee particularly wish to draw the attention of the House to this observation, that a written requisition from the Vizier ought not to be considered in the least degree as a sanction to any measure pursued by the Governor General; for the name and authority of the Vizier appears to be made use of by him, according as it shall happen to suit the particular object to which he intends to apply it. For,

When the Vizier refused to grant assignments for the expence of the temporary brigade employed in his country, and which he considers not only as useless to his Government, but the cause of much loss both in the revenue and customs; and when he also refuses to pay the detached bodies of troops under other European officers, who, he says, bring nothing but confusion to
the

the affairs of Government, and are entirely their own masters : When he pleads the great encrease of his expences, and the deficiencies which have arisen in the revenue, particularly from the excessive drought of the season, and some other causes ; and when he desires to be relieved from the burthen of these troops ;—Your Committee observe, that the Governor General on these occasions considers the Vizier Asoph ul Dowlah as a dependant ; and so far from complying with his request, to relieve him from these burthens, the payment of a foreign army stationed throughout his country, and not obedient to his orders, he writes to him, and requests that he will attend to the representations of Mr. Purling, the Resident at Oude ; who is ordered again to apply to him, in the name of the Government of Calcutta, for assignments for the necessary disbursements of the current year. The Governor General adds, “ That notwithstanding the failure in the harvest
 “ has occasioned a diminution of revenues, yet, with œconomy and attention, he is persuaded that there will be sufficient to answer every service required ; and that he hopes the Vizier will chearfully comply with the demand which Mr. Purling is ordered to make. At all events, the defence of his country is the first object to be attended to, and the regular payment of a well disciplined body of troops is necessary to that end.” To which the Governor General adds, “ that *the*
 “ *Vizier’s engagements with the Company are of such*
 “ *a nature, as obliges him to require and insist on the*
 “ *Vizier’s granting tuncaws (or assignments) to the*
 “ *full amount of their demands upon him for the current*
 “ *year, and upon his reserving funds sufficient to answer*
 “ *them, even should the deficiency of the revenues compel*
 “ *him*

*“ him to leave his own troops unprovided for, or even to
 “ disband a part of them to enable him to effect it.”*

And your Committee must observe, that in the proceedings of the Council, 15th December 1779, the Governor General has stated, that the Vizier eventually and necessarily became a vassal to the Company.

This letter to the Vizier, and his instructions to Mr. Middleton of the 23d of September 1781, are confirmations that he considers the Vizier in a state of vassalage, and treats him accordingly.

But when a general resumption of jaghires is the object of deliberation, the Vizier is introduced making a request to the Governor General for that purpose; and then we find it declared by the Governor General, that the Vizier's constancy, and the firmness of his alliance with the Company, entitle him to every consideration and relief.

And when the Governor General determined to remove Mr. Bristow a second time from his appointment as Resident at the court of Oude, your Committee find the Vizier's name is brought forward; and a letter from him to the Governor General is made the foundation of a measure of disobedience and contempt of the orders of the Court of Directors. He writes to the Governor General, complains of Mr. Bristow, and concludes his letter with these words, “ For God's sake do
 “ not be unfavourable to me in this matter, but recall
 “ Mr. John Bristow from hence, and grant to me a written
 “ agreement, specifying that Mr. Middleton shall be
 “ continued for ever with me; and to prevent his applying
 “ to Europe, send me, if you think proper, the draft of
 “ Letters which I may write to the King, the Vizier, and
 “ the Chiefs of the Company; and do you also write—
 “ From

“ From your favour and kindness let this be done
 “ without delay.”

In consequence of this letter, Mr. Bristow, who had been nominated to that station by the positive orders of the Court of Directors, is recalled, and Mr. Middleton, who holds that office in opposition to their orders, continues Resident at the Vizier's court, and appears to be a very principal actor in the several matters which compose the subject of this Report.—This happened about six weeks before the Governor General proceeded on his journey to Benares.

Your Committee observe strong marks of dependency in the before-mentioned letter of the Vizier's. In another letter on the same subject, he declares that he *cannot* submit to the authority of *two* gentlemen. The inference then is undeniable, that he *can* submit to the authority of *one*. The opinion of the Directors upon the recall of Mr. Bristow, is inserted in the Appendix, No. 8.

Your Committee also observe, in the instructions given by the Governor General to Mr. Middleton, he positively directs that no European (except those excepted) shall be suffered to reside within any part of the Nabob's dominions; and that if they did not obey the Resident's notice in writing to depart the country, after a limited time given them, in case of refusal the Vizir's name is to be made use of; and the Resident is directed to inform him, that he may use his *own authority to compel them to depart*.

Your Committee observe, that the temporizing and indecisive conduct of the Nabob Vizier, on the 12th of January is assigned by the Resident as the cause which necessitated him to take the most immediate and decisive interference. That on the 13th of January, the
 day

day after the seizure of his mother's palace, the Nabob writes a letter to the Governor General, which was transmitted by Mr. Middleton, as follows: " I have
 " not to my knowledge been deficient in any thing, nor
 " will I be deficient whatever I regard to do; and
 " whatever Mr. Middleton shall advise for the advantage of my affairs I will do. I have, to increase and
 " confirm our friendship, *even done that which was not*
 " *thought of, or resolved on.* You will be informed of
 " the whole by the letters from Mr. Middleton."

This reference to Mr. Middleton obliges your Committee to remark, that there is evidence before the House, in the report respecting Fyzoolah Cawn, that Mr. Middleton wrote a draft of a letter, which he transmitted to that Nabob, and desired Fyzoolah Cawn to write letters to him and to the Governor General, agreeable to that draft; which he did; yet Mr. Middleton states to the Council General, that he had received from Fyzoolah Cawn a formal offer of the assistance suggested to him, and that this offer was made without any apparent reluctance on his part, or the smallest efforts on Mr. Middleton's part, incompatible with the dignity of the Company, &c. &c.

Your Committee cannot obtain any stated account of the losses which the Begums sustained by this *immediate and decisive interference* of the English Resident, so contrary to the faith of the nation pledged as a guarantee; but it appears, that the English Resident had actually received from the Nabob Vizier, in money and in drafts on their two Eunuchs, Bahar Ali Khân and Jewer Ali Khân, which would soon be realized, near 600,000*l.* and this is confirmed by the evidence of Mr. Scott, who understood from Mr. Hastings, that this money was procured by the Vizir from the Begums,

And

And being asked, by what means it was procured ? he said, it was seized by the Vizier ; and he conceived, that as the Begums had certainly and clearly been engaged in the rebellion against the Vizier, he had a right to incapacitate them as far as he could from doing mischief in future ; and that could not be better done, than by depriving them of the means of making revolts in future.

There is a letter of the 3d of February 1782, from Mr. Middleton to the Governor General, which states, that in his letters of the 20th, 25th. and 27th ultimo, he had mentioned, that the Bhow Begum had finally agreed to deliver up the treasures of the late Vizier to the Nabob ; and that he had in consequence commenced payment of his debt to the Honourable Company, &c. &c.

Your Committee directed the East India Company to lay before them those three letters of the 20th, 25th, and 27th ultimo, which they conceived would have given every material information upon this subject ; as the Kellah, or Palace, where the mother of the Vizier resided, was taken possession of by the Resident with an armed force, on the 12th January 1782, there appears an interval of at least twelve days before she agreed to deliver up her treasures ; but by the Secretary's letter of the 4th July 1783, it appears that the Governor General has only transmitted to the East India Company the Resident's letter of the 25th January 1782.

Your Committee will now examine into the reasons alledged for these extraordinary proceedings towards the Begums. The Governor General and Council, in their letter of the 11th of February 1782 to the Court of Directors, thus write, " The just grounds of suspicion
 F " symptoms

“ symptoms of disaffection, and even treachery, they
 “ had displayed in their conduct, made it an object of
 “ serious consideration with him to take the first oppor-
 “ tunity which should offer, *consistent with justice*, to
 “ dispossess them of the means of becoming injurious
 “ to his authority.” They also assign another reason,
 which your Committee are sorry to remark, very similar
 to the reasons assigned by the Governor General, for
 his conduct towards Cheyt Sing, the Rajah of Benares :
 “ The necessities of his (the Vizier’s) Government
 “ requiring extraordinary aid, he resolved to take this
 “ occasion of depriving them of those extensive jag-
 “ hires which enabled them to become troublesome,
 “ by the amount of the Revenues which they yielded,
 “ and the number of dependants necessarily retained
 “ for their collections and defence; and to resume the
 “ lands, allowing pensions to the jaghiredars.”

The Governor General and Council, in the same
 letter, also write to the Company, “ That on the first
 “ attempt made by the Nabob to carry this plan into
 “ execution against the Begum, she determined to resist
 “ his authority, and raised a revolt by means of her
 “ Eunuchs Jewar Ali Khân and Bahar Ali Khân, who
 “ had collected a force of about 5,000 men, in order
 “ to set the Nabob at defiance.”

The opposition made to the Nabob’s orders, when
 the Company’s troops under the Resident’s command
 surrounded the palace of the Begum, and the repre-
 sentation made by the Resident on this matter, have
 been already stated.

But whether it was an actual revolt, as stated by the
 Governor General, or a supposed design of resistance
 to the Vizier’s authority, as stated by the Resident, mea-
 sures of severity were pursued, which certainly were
 unnecessary.

unnecessary, had the resumption of the jaghires been the only object.

In the letter of the Council General to the Court of Directors, it is said, "in order to punish the Begum for this daring conduct, and to put it out of her power to apply the treasures which she had amassed to the purpose of raising further commotions in his country, the Nabob resolved to seize her wealth, which, by the Mahomedan laws, he is entitled to, as an inheritance from his Father, who in the latter years of his life had committed his treasury wholly to her charge, and it had remained with her after his death."

It appears that the Governor General encouraged and supported this resolution; but not so much for the reasons assigned by the Nabob, as because he thought it equally unjust and impolitic, that the Begums should be allowed to retain the means of which they had already made so pernicious an use, by exciting disturbances in the country, and a revolt against the Nabob their Sovereign.

Your Committee must observe, That the Governor General could not with propriety encourage or support the Nabob in his resolution to seize the wealth of his Mother and Grandmother, upon the principle of the Mahomedan law; for whatever might have been the principle of that law, the claim under it could not be then admitted. The Nabob had, by a solemn act, for a very valuable consideration, renounced all claim, and had sworn never to make any future demand on her. The Governor General and Council had, upon the motion of the Governor General, pledged the Company to guarantee the due observance of that family compact, not six years since, and confirmed that

guarantee by their orders to the Resident in March, 1778; and therefore, all operation of the Mahomedan law upon this point was totally out of the question.

But your Committee cannot help pointing out to the House, what appears to them to have influenced the Governor General in his determination to carry this measure into execution. He declares, "That he is not too sanguine in his expectations of the result of these proceedings, but that he has required and received the Nabob's promise, that whatever acquisitions shall be obtained from the issue of them, it was to be primarily applied to the discharge of the balance actually due from him to the Company."

And here it must be remarked, that by the instructions given to Mr. Middleton, in the Governor General's letter of the 23d of September, the whole surplus of the encrease of the revenue arising from the resumption of the jaghires, was to be appropriated to the discharge of the Nabob's debt to the Company; and that this was the mode adopted by the Governor General at that period for discharging the balance due to the Company.

The discharge of so large a debt as was due from the Vizier to the Company, by the gradual product of the excess of revenue arising from the resumed jaghires, must have been the operation of several years, whilst it must be remembered, that the Company's affairs had been represented by the Governor General to be sinking under the weight of their accumulated distress.

Your Committee having examined the several charges made by the Governor General against the Begums, think they may be reduced under three heads,

First,

First. Exciting disturbances in the country, and giving assistance to Rajah Cheyt Sing.

Second. Revolting against the Nabob their Sovereign.

Third. Having such a hatred to the English nation, as to make them aim at their utter extirpation.

As to the first head, your Committee observe, that commotions did exist in the month of September, 1781, in the Province of Gurruckpoor, appears incontestibly; but your Committee, in the course of their investigations, have perceived, that the Vizier's authority was frequently opposed in the different Provinces under his government. Mr. Bristow, the Resident at Oude, in his letter of the 22d January, 1777, thus writes to the Council General :

“ Another great alarm which prevails is, the contempt with which the Vizier's authority is treated; his orders are ill executed; his perwannahs disregarded, even in the neighbouring districts to the capital, unless accompanied by similar ones from the person immediately in charge of the Province. In some distant parts of the country, neither his Excellency or his Aumils are much regarded. *The Gurruckpoor district particularly can hardly be said to be under the Vizier's government, as it is held by Zemindars, who pay little obedience to the Aumils, and discharge their revenues with great irregularity.*”

It appears that this opinion of the state of the Province of Gurruckpoor was not taken up lightly; for your Committee observe, that on the 11th of February following, Mr. Bristow thus describes it: “ The country of Gurruckpoor, particularly that part of it
“ which

“ which lies contiguous to the mountains, although *not*
 “ *in actual rebellion, is so far unsettled as scarcely to be*
 “ *deemed a part of the Vizier's dominions.* The re-
 “ venues of that district is rated at 5,60,000 rupees
 “ (about £.60,000); but from the manner in which
 “ payments have hitherto been made, I do not appre-
 “ hend that more than half that amount will be
 “ realized; and the reason which the Aumil assigns
 “ for this failure, is *the number of Zemindars on the*
 “ *confines of the Province, who (being in possession of*
 “ *Mud Forts) withhold their revenues on various pre-*
 “ *texts, until it is extorted from them by force.* Under
 “ *these circumstances the charge of the army necessary to*
 “ *be kept up in that one district, is almost equal to the*
 “ *amount of the collections.*”

Your Committee must observe, that the Province of
 Gurruckpoor is contiguous to that of Benares. The
 evidence before related plainly shews the state of the
 former Province in the year 1777, when the Nabob of
 Oude had no foreign enemy. With such a disposition
 in the Rajahs and Zemindars to revolt against the
 Vizier's authority, and to seize every pretext to avoid
 the payment of their revenues, it would not have ap-
 peared very extraordinary if they had considered the
 commotions in Benares and Gazipoor, and the pecu-
 liar situation of the Governor General (when obliged
 to retreat by night to the fortress of Chunargur, for
 safety to his person and retinue) as a moment favour-
 able to their own interest, accustomed as they were to
 resist the authority of the Vizier's Officers, and to
 avoid the payment of their revenues but on com-
 pulsion.

These are the observations which might have been
 made by your Committee, if the Zemindars of Bareilly,
 Gurruckpoor,

Gurruckpoor, &c. had actually taken up arms in consequence of the commotions in the adjacent Provinces. But your Committee particularly call the attention of the House to the following passages of the Governor General's Narrative: "No sooner had the rebellion of
 " this Zemindary (Benares) manifested itself, than its
 " contagion instantly flew to Fyzabad, and the extensive territory lying on the North of the river Dewa,
 " and known by the name of Gurruckpoor and Barech."

And in another place the Governor General states, that "Two battallions of regular Sepoys in the
 " Vizier's service, under the command of Lieutenant
 " Colonel Hannay, who had been entrusted with the
 " charge of that district, were attacked and surrounded
 " in various places, many of them cut to pieces, and
 " Colonel Hannay himself, encompassed by multitudes, narrowly escaped the same fate."

From this representation only the House could not but believe, that the rebellious conduct of Cheyt Sing (as it is called by the Governor General) had so much infected the minds of the Zemindars of Gurruckpoor and Barech, &c. that, animated by his example, they instantly took up arms.

But your Committee find the fact relative to the insurrection of those Rajahs to differ greatly from this representation; for your Committee observe, that on the 29th November, 1780, the following letter was sent from Lieutenant Colonel Hannay to Mr. Middleton, Resident at the Vizier's Court:

"I beg leave to submit to your perusal the enclosed
 " copies of two letters I had the honour to address the
 " late Resident, on the subject of the recall of the
 " battalion of Sepoys of the 2d brigade, which was
 " ordered to assist me in the reduction of Zelim Sing,
 " and

“ *and the other rebellious Rajahs inhabiting the country*
 “ *between Goonduck and Gurruckpoor; and to inform*
 “ you, that in consequence of its removal at so critical
 “ a juncture, the Aumil (Collector) *has totally lost his*
 “ *authority in no less than thirteen Purgunnabs (districts)*
 “ *and their collections have been almost entirely stop-*
 “ *ped* for upwards of two months: nor can his au-
 “ thority be re-established without the assistance of a
 “ battalion. As this event involves the fate of the
 “ Company’s Tunkah (assignments) upon these
 “ districts, I beg leave to submit to you the ex-
 “ pediency of procuring him the necessary assistance as
 “ soon as possible.

“ (Signed)

“ Alex. Hannay,

“ Lieutenant Colonel, commanding
 “ the troops stationed at Gur-
 “ ruckpoor and Bareetch.”

On the 3d December, 1780, your Committee observe, that Mr. Middleton writes to the Governor General :

“ Conformably to your instructions, I have the
 “ honour to enclose for your information, copies of
 “ the letters from his Excellency the Vizier, and my
 “ letters accompanying them, both in application to
 “ the commanding officers at Cawnpoor and Futtyghur
 “ for the assistance of two battalions to act in the ser-
 “ vice of the collection of the Vizier’s assignments to
 “ the Honourable Company, for the cause particu-
 “ larized in these letters. I shall be careful to return
 “ these battalions upon the earliest information of
 “ *their having accomplished the service required, the*
 “ *precise*

*“ precise period of which it is impossible now to foresee
“ or describe.”*

Copies of the Vizier's and Resident's letters to Colonels Morgan and Muir, are inserted in the Appendix, No. 13. But the Vizier's letters to Major Moses Crawford (one of the enclosures in the Resident's letter of 3d December 1780, abovementioned) is as follows:

*“ Zalim Sing, &c. Zemindars Krajy, are raising
“ commotions in the Mahals (districts) of Amooda,
“ Bareetch; Gurruckpoor, &c. by which great injury
“ is done to to the Sirkar (Government.) Is it there-
“ fore necessary, that on the receipt of this letter you
“ march with your battalion, and cross the river
“ Ganges, where you will, agreeable to the directions
“ of Colonel Hannay, exert yourself for the punishment
“ of the revolters, and the settlement of all matters,
“ that the money due to the Sirkar may be recovered.
“ As the commotions of Zalim Sing, &c. have al-
“ ready been of long continuance, it is absolutely ne-
“ cessary, that immediately on the receipt of this
“ letter you cross the Ganges with the battalion. I
“ shall send another army for the affairs of Khyrabad,
“ but you are not to wait till their arrival.*

“ (Signed)

“ A true Copy,

“ N. Middleton.

From these letters it appears that Lieutenant Colonel Hannay, in the year 1780, had been ordered to reduce Zalim Sing, and the other rebellious Rajahs inhabiting the country between the Goonduck (river) and Gurruckpoor; and that by the recall of part of the troops employed on that service, the Nabob's officer had then totally lost his authority over thirteen Pur-

gunnahs (districts); and that the collection of the revenue had been almost entirely stopped for two months.

It appears from the Vizier's letter to Major Crawford, that he was ordered immediately to cross the Ganges; and under the directions of Colonel Hannay, he was to exert himself for the punishment of the revolted, and the settlement of all matters, that the money due to the Sirkar (Government) may be recovered.

It appears from this letter, that the commotions of Zalim Sing had been of long continuance, and therefore it became necessary immediately to send a force on that service.

It appears from the Resident's letter to the Council General of the 3d December, that he would return the troops to their respective stations, as soon as they had accomplished the service required, the precise period of which it was impossible he could then foresee or describe.

The House will perceive, from the Records of the Company, that it is proved, beyond all possibility of contradiction, that the Rajahs and Zemindars of Bareilly and Gurruckpoor, &c. had revolted from the Vizier's authority some time in the year 1780; that Lieutenant Colonel Hannay was employed in the reduction of those rebellious Rajahs in the same year; that the reduction was not effected in November 1780; that troops were sent to his assistance in December following, with strong injunctions from the Vizier to punish the revolted: Your Committee must now remark, that the arrest of Cheyt Sing was in August 1781; it was therefore impossible that the contagion of what is called this rebellion, could have excited the revolt in the Provinces

vinces of Bareilly and Gurruckpoor, since that revolt existed in full force in December 1780, and had then been of some continuance.

The Governor General supports his accusations against the Begums by sundry affidavits of British officers, and others, who attest the commotions in the Province of Gurruckpoor. Some of these affirm, that it was reported the Nabob Vizier himself was suspected to wish well to Cheyt Sing; many of them state a report, that the Nabob Saadit Khan, brother of the Vizier, was inimical to the English; and most of them declare, that it was generally rumoured that the Begums, or their Eunuchs by their orders, gave encouragement and assistance to Cheyt Sing whilst he was in arms against our nation; and in some it is affirmed, that they were reported to be the authors of the disturbances in the Vizier's dominions.

Lieutenant Colonel Hannay, who commanded in the district of Gurruckpoor (and who by evidence before your Committee, as well as by what appears in some of the affidavits) had an interest in the collection of the revenues, and a share in the government of that district, did, on the 31st of December, 1781, make an affidavit before the Governor General.

It is to be remarked, that Colonel Hannay, after having given hearsay evidence against the Mother and Grandmother of the Vizier, and which most materially affected their honour, fortune, estate, and dignity, declares, "*That he is restrained from mentioning the names of those Zemautdars (Officers of Horse) from whom he received his information, from an apprehension, that if their names became public, it might operate very much to their prejudice, if not to their ruin; but that the facts which he hath deposed are true.*"

Your Committee cannot read this affidavit without commiserating the deplorable situation of these unfortunate Ladies.—An English officer of rank swears, that the conversations which passed between him and certain native officers of the Vizier are true: These conversations contained matter which tended to a very high degree to criminate them. Proceedings of a very severe nature are carried on against them, twelve days after this deposition was taken; and yet Lieutenant Colonel Hannay is restrained from mentioning the names of his informers, lest, if known, it might operate to their prejudice, or even ruin. These Ladies are therefore exposed to all the consequences of anonymous accusations, upon the plea of securing the informers from any prejudice that might ensue by their names being made public.

Upon such an affidavit the House will form their opinion; but your Committee cannot avoid remarking, that when such reasons are assigned for secrecy, it seems to confirm a suspicion, founded on the reluctant conduct of the Vizier, that the violent measures pursued by the Governor General and the English Resident, under the authority of a written requisition from the Nabob Vizier, against his Mother and Grandmother, were against his own consent; for if he thought them really deserving of that ignominy and disgrace which they have suffered, the officers who gave this information to Lieutenant Colonel Hannay were entitled to expect promotion and reward, rather than to apprehend prejudice or ruin.

The Governor General in his Narrative states,
 “ That in Fyzabad, the Mother and Grandmother of
 “ the Vizier openly espoused the party of Cheyt Sing,
 “ encouraging and inviting people to enlist for his
 “ service;

" service ; and that their servants took up arms against
 " the English." In the same page he says, " That
 " the Nabob Vizier was charged with being privy
 " to the intrigues which had produced those disturb-
 " ances, and the little account which he seemed to
 " make of them, served to countenance the suspicion :
 " But the Governor General never afforded it the
 " slightest degree of credit ; for neither his character,
 " the tenor of his past conduct, the expectations he
 " knew that the Vizier entertained of assistance and
 " relief from him, together with his inability to sup-
 " port himself without the protection of the British
 " Government, would allow the Governor General for
 " a moment to entertain a thought so injurious to his
 " fidelity, and so contrary to probability."

If the Governor General formed his opinion of the
 Vizier's conduct upon true and just principles, the
 same modes of reasoning ought to have been applied
 in behalf of the Begums. They are women of high
 birth and elevated rank ; by law and custom immured
 in a seraglio for life ; persons whom the Governor Ge-
 neral, in 1775 and 1778, had particularly pointed out,
 from their rank, character, and sex, to merit the pro-
 tection of the Company ; the general tenor of whose
 past conduct, particularly when they sued for and ob-
 tained the promise of an asylum in our dominions,
 against the rapacity or cruelty of their Son and Grand-
 son, manifested their total dependance on us. The
 faith and honour of the English nation were solemnly
 pledged for the protection of one of them ; and their
 total inability to support themselves without the assist-
 ance of our Government, has been proved by the
 event. These being facts of public notoriety, your
 Committee must remark, that it was the indispensable
 duty

duty of the Governor General to have admitted the same arguments in their favour, which had operated with so much success in behalf of their Son and Grandson.

The Governor General states, " That the Vizier
 " was surrounded by men base in their characters, and
 " improvident in their understandings; his favourites,
 " and the companions of his looser hours. These had
 " every cause to dread the effect of his influence on
 " theirs; and both these and the relations of the family,
 " whose views of consequence and power were
 " intercepted by our participation in the administration
 " of his affairs, entertained a mortal hatred to our
 " nation, and openly avowed it. These all joined in
 " prescribing the most pernicious and fatal councils to
 " the Nabob, and represented this as the time to deliver
 " himself from what they described as the yoke
 " of servitude; although he firmly rejected all their
 " persuasions, of which the Governor General was
 " assured, yet the Vizier was at their mercy, and it
 " was in their power to use both his authority and his
 " person for the perpetration of their own designs."

If the Vizier, who was at the head of a very considerable army, was in so dependant a state as to be at the mercy of those whom the Governor General describes as the most abandoned characters, and whom, from motives of interest and ambition, not only entertained a mortal hatred to our nation, but openly avowed it; and if it was in the power of those men to use the Vizier's authority and his person for the perpetration of their own designs; your Committee do conceive it very possible, that the names and authority of the Begums, who were by custom immemorially closely confined within the walls of their palace, and

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of course obliged to act by their agents, might have been improperly used against their own consent, possibly without their knowledge, and perhaps by those very persons who are said to entertain a mortal hatred to our nation ; and therefore, that the reasoning of the Governor General seemed to apply to their situation more forcibly than to that of the Vizier.

If the matter contained in the affidavits was to be considered as proof of guilt, the Nabob Sadet Ali Khan's conduct is represented in very strong terms as inimical to our nation : But the Governor General thus mentions it, " When he had resolved to retreat from " Benares, he sent his Persian writer to the Nabob " Sadet Ali Khan, to recommend to his care the " wounded Seapoys whom he was obliged to leave " behind him ; and that he made the same request to " him by letter, after his arrival at Chunar. The Governor General does him the justice to attest, that he " faithfully and liberally complied with his request, by " visiting them in person, and furnishing them with " provisions and money, and ordering native surgeons " to attend them ; and as they were able to bear the " removal, he had them all brought to his own quarters."

The Governor General further states, " That many " reports and subscriptions had prevailed, that the Nabob Sadet Ali Khan was concerned in some of the " designs formed against our Nation." The Governor General can neither credit nor refute them. He concludes, " the evil imputed to him is at least doubtful ; the good which he did is certain, and he is entitled to the entire merit of it."

The Governor General produces no other proof to support his allegation of the supposed crime of the Begums,

gums, in exciting and supporting (what he called) the rebellion of Cheyt Sing; than the letters to and from the Resident, Mr. Middleton; and sundry affidavits already referred to. The correspondence has already been taken notice of by your Committee; they now deem it necessary to make some observations upon the origin of these affidavits, as well as on the manner of taking them.

Your Committee find by the evidence of Major Fairfax, that Sir Elijah Impey, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Judicature, employed the opportunity of a recess from judicial business, to visit the court and dominions of the Vizier Asoph ul Dowlah; expecting by his journey not only to gratify his curiosity by the sight of those distant provinces, but also to re-establish his health from the change of air.

The Governor General says, “ I have also added
 “ attestations of all the principal facts and events,
 “ sworn before the Chief Justice, *to whose advice I am*
 “ *obliged for having suggested it.* It did not strike my
 “ mind that matters of such notoriety here would re-
 “ quire some more authentic verification of them at
 “ home, than the recital of the man whose reputation
 “ is so immediately concerned, as mine is, in the
 “ judgment which my superiors, and which the public
 “ at large, will have a right to form upon it. I am
 “ sensible of the wisdom of the precaution, and sorry it
 “ was not earlier intimated, that I might have had time
 “ to collect a large fund of evidence, although I have
 “ reason to be satisfied with the weight of that which I
 “ have obtained.”

Your Committee observe, that Sir Elijah Impey was with the Governor General at Benares on the 20th November 1781, and that he soon afterwards set off post for Lucknow. This city is the capital of the province
 of

of Oude, and not within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court at Calcutta ; any official act of the Chief Justice in that city must therefore appear extra-judicial.

Your Committee must observe, that the Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey, had, upon a former occasion, in a letter to the Earl of Rochford, one of his Majesty's late Secretaries of State, most earnestly requested him, " not only to suspend your own judgment, but to intercede for me and the other judges with his Majesty and his Ministers, *not to lend a willing ear to any charges, invectives, insinuations, or allusions, in papers, either public or private, tending to prejudice our fortunes or fame, before the facts are examined, or we have an opportunity of contradicting them if misrepresented.* My anxiety must be my excuse for desiring intercession, in a matter which I know the justice and candour of my Sovereign and his Ministers would grant to the meanest subject unasked."

And your Committee must also observe, that the Chief Justice not only advised the Governor General to obtain attestations of all the principal facts and events, but at the latter end of November 1781, he received attestations. Sir Elijah Impey is the only British judicial Magistrate that ever was in that city, and remained there **only** a very few days ; those depositions then taken do not appear **even** to have been communicated to the Begum, nor any notice given to her that such depositions had been made against her, nor does a word appear of defence on her part ; yet in January following the Begum's palace is surrounded by an armed force, and she is deprived of immense wealth. After this transaction, those affidavits, previously taken, are sent to England, and produced as proofs of guilt. Your Committee cannot help expressing their opinion, that it

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would have been much more becoming the dignity and decorum of the Chief Justice, not to have had any interference whatsoever in this extra-judicial matter; but if he did interfere, he ought to have considered that the Begum was a Princess guaranteed by a public Treaty, and therefore entitled to the protection of the sovereign authority of this country: Circumstanced as he was, he ought not, nor was it any part of his duty, to receive such affidavits at Lucknow; affidavits which highly prejudiced her fortune and fame; and particularly when no opportunity had been given to her of contradicting them if misrepresented, or not founded in fact.

Your Committee must observe, it does not appear Cheyt Sing had any previous knowledge that it was the Governor General's intentions to put him under an arrest; on the contrary, his attendance on the Governor at the borders of his own dominions, strongly marked his confidence in the faith of the treaty. The Begums could not have known the Governor General's intentions; and it is apparent, that there could not have been any previous concert, because Cheyt Sing's subsequent conduct originated from measures which he himself could not possibly foresee, and certainly, not foreseeing, could not possibly provide against; but even if he had foreseen the treatment which he afterwards experienced from the Governor General, and had early endeavoured to cultivate the friendship of the two Begums, it seems bad policy, and highly improbable, that they should, by uniting with Cheyt Sing, have risked their own peace and happiness, by forfeiting the protection which they then actually enjoyed under the English guarantee.

Your

Your Committee conceive, that these ladies must have been sensible, from their own experience, that it was impossible that such an union (supposing it to be ever in their thoughts) could succeed; for they had seen, before the English arrived to that degree of power which they now enjoy in Hindostan, that the invasion of Bakar, by the Vizier Sujah Dowlah their Sovereign, then the most powerful Omrah of the East, had been not only repelled with disgrace, but the war carried into his own country; and that, after many repeated successes, the English had obliged him to abandon not only his capital but all his own dominions, and to seek an asylum amongst the Rohilla Chiefs. The Begums had personally experienced all the vicissitudes attendant upon such a great reverse of fortune; and they had seen, that when Sujah Dowlah was so reduced as to throw himself on the mercy of the English Government, he obtained from their clemency the restoration of that country which he had not been able to protect with his sword. Since that restoration, the Begums well knew that the British army, on the first summons, marched to the defence of Sujah Dowlah's dominions, and frustrated the repeated attempts of the Maratta armies to invade the territories of their Lord and our ally; and they had seen, but some few years since, the British troops employed under the order of Sujah Dowlah, to exterminate all the Rohilla Chiefs (those Chiefs who had granted him protection in his distress) and they had also seen those countries subdued by our forces, and annexed to the dominions of Sujah Dowlah.

With all this evidence of the extent and influence of the British power in their immediate recollection, it appears utterly improbable for them to expect that one

of the Zemindars, formerly dependent on Oude, and now on Calcutta, could successfully resist that power and that authority which they had seen so triumphant over many of the most powerful states in India, and which power had guaranteed them in the quiet possession of their property and estates.

In the declaration of Hyder Beg, one of the Vizier's Ministers, taken before Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Judicature, at Benares, your Committee find his opinion of the rank and power of Cheyt Sing as follows, " The rank of the Rajah is
 " nothing more than a Zemindar; no one will pay a
 " regard to his attempts; and a small force will be
 " sufficient to chastise him. Far better will it be to
 " lay aside such thoughts as these, to implore pardon
 " of the Governor General, to give up his forts, to
 " send back to him the boats and all his baggage; or
 " rather it would be better that he should go alone,
 " and with his hands bound, into the presence of the
 " Governor."

This opinion was delivered by Hyder Beg to a Vacqueel, who was sent to him by Cheyt Sing very soon after the Governor General's retreat from Benares to Chunar, after the defeat of Captain Mayaffre's detachment at Ramnagar, and before our troops had been successful in any military operations against the Rajah; and your Committee have entered it in their observations, to point out to the House the real light in which Cheyt Sing was considered, even by the Minister of the Vizier.

Your Committee deemed it necessary to call upon Mr. John Scott, agent to the Governor General, to know whether Mr. Hastings had transmitted to him any matter tending to explain the Governor General's conduct

conduct relating to the troubles of Benares, or in the dominions of the Vizier. He informed them, that the Governor General had sent nothing to him but what he had sent to the East India Company. And being asked, Whether Mr. Hastings gave any reasons to him, whom he had authorized to defend his conduct in cases in which it might be questioned, for not instructing him more fully upon these points? he said, *None at all; but he was very amply instructed by receiving a copy of the Narrative.* Being afterwards examined, whether he, as agent to the Governor General, had any proofs to lay before the Committee, that the Begums had certainly and clearly engaged in the rebellion against the Vizier, except the affidavits annexed to the Governor General's Narrative? he said, besides those affidavits Mr. Hastings had transmitted to him a duplicate of a letter from Mr. Hollond to the Supreme Council, stating a conversation which had passed between him and the Nizam at Hyderabad, on the 6th or 7th of October, 1781, This conversation appeared to Mr. Hastings to confirm very strongly the proofs of the intrigues of the Begums with Cheyt Sing, and his predetermined resolution to revolt.

Your Committee thought it necessary to examine Mr. Scott as to the parties stated in Mr. Hollond's letter to be privy to that plot; who said, they were Hyder Ally, the Marattas of Poonah, Mahajee Scindia, Nudjiff Cawn, Cheyt Sing, the disaffected Zemindars of Oude, and Moodajee Bousslah: The Nizam gave the information. Being asked whether either of the three armies which were to act in union, according to the advices received by the Nizam, and transmitted to the Council General by Mr. Hollond, did actually commence any military operations against Bengal, Bahar, or the

the Province of Oude? he said, they did not; we concluded a peace with Mahajee Scindia; Nudjiff Cawn did not move; Hyder Ally was employed in the Carnatic and to the Southward; Madajee kept quiet in Berar; the revolt of Cheyt Sing and the disaffected Zemindars was suppressed, and the Maratta army continued in the neighbourhood of Poonah.

Mr. Scott has given in evidence to your Committee, that he thinks it would require thirty-three days to carry a letter from Benares to Hyderabad; but if sent by our Government, twenty-eight days, as we have Dawks (established posts) from Benares to Calcutta, and from Calcutta to Hyderabad; and thinks, that the most expeditious method of sending a letter from Benares to Hyderabad, is by way of Calcutta, because of those established posts.

As the seizure and subsequent escape of Cheyt Sing happened on the 16th August, and the defeat of the English detachment under Captain Mayaffre, and the subsequent retreat of the Governor General to Chunar, was on the 20th August; these events could be known at Hyderabad, according to Mr. Scott's evidence, about the 20th September.

On the 8th October Mr. Hollond writes of a conversation betwixt the Nizam and the Maratta Minister, held the preceding day: Peace betwixt the Marattas and our nation was the subject. The Maratta Minister had heard of the commotions in Benares; he talked high, and mentioned an union of many States against us, and the intended march of several armies to invade the British possessions. The Nizam himself remarked to Mr. Hollond, that if he could have been placed in a situation to overhear what passed, he would

would have been surprized at the high tone of the Maratta Minister's requisition.

It is a convincing proof to your Committee, that this was mere conversation, since no one movement appears to have been made by either of those different powers, with a view to accomplish the general or particular object of this supposed confederacy against us: on the contrary, the army of Moodajee Bouflah was at this very time returned from the borders of our territories to their own capital; and so far does Moodajee appear from entertaining any idea of entering into any confederacy against us, that his Son, Chinnajee, had engaged to detach two thousand of his horse to serve under Colonel Pearce, then on his march into the Carnatic. Money was actually advanced to them in August, 1781, in consequence of letters from the Governor General, "recommending" "to the Chief of Gamjan to afford them such assistance as might be necessary for facilitating their progress through the districts under his authority." Your Committee have also inserted in the Appendix, the Governor General and Council's letter of the 14th June, 1781, to Sir Eyre Coote; which states, that the Rajah of Berar intended to dispute his Dewan to Poonah for the purpose of effecting an accommodation, and desiring that full powers and instructions should be sent to General Goddard, and that full credentials and instructions were given to him to negotiate and conclude a peace with the Government of Poonah.

And during the whole of the transactions at Benares, Moodajee's Vackeel, Benaram Pundit, was the constant attendant on the Governor General, and rewarded by him with a jaghire of upwards of £. 2,500 per annum for his faithful attachment.

With

With respect to Madajee Scindeah, another of these confederates, your Committee find, by a letter of the Governor General to Colonel Muir, of the 10th of September, 1781, that he expresses great satisfaction in hearing that he (Scindeah) had anticipated the overtures of the Bengal Government; and that the general expressions and desires of peace, used at his first interview with Mr. Ford, indicate a disposition so consonant with his own.

And your Committee find an agreement for peace was actually signed by Colonel Muir on the part of the Company, and Mahajee Scindeah for himself, on the 15th October, 1781; so that it is apparent Mahajee Scindeah could not have been a party in this supposed confederacy, since he began the negotiation for peace with us before he could possibly know of the commotions at Benares, and signed the articles of peace before Bidjegur, the capital of Cheyt Sing, was surrendered to us.

Your Committee cannot consider this conversation as any sort of proof of a predetermined resolution in Cheyt Sing to revolt. It was held fifty-two days after the Governor General had put him under confinement, and forty-eight days after the Governor General had found it necessary to retreat from the city of Benares to the fortress of Chunar; and the Maratta Minister might have conceived, from the Governor General's situation, and the commotions in the Provinces of Benares and Gazipoor, that he ought to avail himself of these difficulties to encrease the demands of his Court in a treaty of peace which was then negotiating. And *with respect to the Begums*, your Committee must observe, that *there does not appear the most distant pretext of criminality, or even blame, to be urged against them.*

them from this conversation of the Maratta Minister, for their names are not even mentioned or alluded to in it; and yet Mr. Hastings has declared, that it confirms very strongly the proofs of the intrigues of the Begums with Cheyt Sing.

Your Committee have inserted the whole of Mr. Scott's evidence, together with extracts of Mr. Holland's letters of the 22d September and 8th October 1781. As these letters are of a recent date, and treat of very important negociations, perhaps yet depending, your Committee do not think themselves warranted to make public the whole of these letters; but they have annexed such parts as have immediate reference to the point alluded to.

The evidence of Mr. Scott, relative to the length of time necessary to convey letters from Benares to Hyderabad, is not satisfactory to your Committee. They have annexed the best account they could obtain of the distance from Benares to Hyderabad, as well by Calcutta as by Nagpoor, the capital of Berar. According to the usual course of travelling of Cossids (men employed to carry letters where no regular post is established) they find, that the journey would be performed from within eighteen to twenty-five days, according to the season of the year, and the diligence of a Cossid; and possibly in less time, if the promise of a good reward be made for expedition.

Your Committee now proceed to the second head of accusation, that of the Begums revolting against their Sovereign.

In proof of this assertion, your committee find no complaint from the Vizier on the records of the Company, that his Mother and Grandmother had revolted against his authority; on the contrary, your Com-

mittee find, from the Resident's letter of the 19th of December, that the Nabob, from what cause he knew not, had shewn a great reluctance to enter on the business (the resumption of the jaghires;) but the Governor General describes it to be an act *equally necessary to the restoration of the peace of that country,* and to the discharge of the Nabob's debts to the Company.

Your Committee have documents before them, which prove, that peace was restored in the Province of Oude before the public tranquillity was fully re-established in the Province of Benares. The surrender of Bidjegur, the principal fortress of Cheyt Sing, was on the 10th of November 1781; but in a letter of the 5th of November the Governor General transmits to the Council of Calcutta the settlement of the revenues of that Zemindary, which he had made with the person whom he had appointed to succeed Cheyt Sing.

Your Committee observe, that the Governor General in his Narrative states, "That on the 8th of October, Major Naylor, with the 23d regiment, having been detached to the relief of Lieutenant-Colonel Hannay, arrived on the Northern banks of the Dewar, defeated a large force which had assembled round Colonel Hannay and entirely dispersed them." He adds, "That the return of the Nabob soon after effectually restored the quiet of the country." This letter decisively proves, that the commotions in Oude, whatever they might have been, and from whatever cause they originated, had ceased, and that peace had been restored to that Province some time in October 1781.

Your

Your Committee are therefore convinced, that the resumption of the jaghires was an act totally unnecessary to the restoration of the peace of the country, because that peace had been restored before the resumption was made; it might indeed have been a measure of convenience, with a view to relieve the distresses of the Company, by the discharge of the Nabob's Vizier's debt to them.—The reluctance of the Vizier, and the impatience of the Governor General for this measure, will now be considered,

Your Committee now lay before the House, extracts of two letters from the Vizier; one to the Governor General, received at Calcutta on the 24th of February 1780; the other to the Resident Mr. Purling, delivered for Translation 15th May 1780.

Extract Letter from the Nabob Vizier to the Governor General; received 24th February 1780.

“ I have received your letter, and understand the
 “ contents. I cannot describe the solidity of your
 “ friendship and brotherly affection, which subsisted
 “ between you and my late father. From the friend-
 “ ship of the Company he received numberless advan-
 “ tages; and I, notwithstanding I was left an orphan,
 “ from your favour, and that of the Company, was
 “ perfectly at ease, being satisfied that every thing
 “ would be well, and that I should continue in the
 “ same security that I was during my father’s life-
 “ time, from your protection.

“ I accordingly, from the day of his death, have ne-
 “ ver omitted to cultivate your favour, and the protec-
 “ tion of the Company; and whatever was the desire
 “ and directions of the Council at that time, I have
 “ ever since conformed to, and obeyed with readiness.
 “ Thanks be given to God, that I have never as yet
 “ been backward in performing the will of the Eng-
 “ lish Company, of the Council, and of you; and
 “ have always been, from my heart, ready to obey
 “ them; and have never given you any trouble from
 “ my difficulties or wishes. This I have done simply,
 “ from my own knowledge of your favour towards me,
 “ and from my being certain that you would learn the
 “ particulars of my distresses and difficulties from other
 “ quarters, and would then shew your friendship and
 “ good will in whatever was for my advantage: *But*
 “ *when the knife had penetrated to the bone, and I was*
 “ *surrounded with such heavy distresses, that I could no*
 “ *longer*

“ longer live in expectation, I then wrote an account of
 “ my difficulties. The answer which I have received
 “ to it is such, that it has given me inexpressible grief
 “ and affliction: I never had the least idea or expectation
 “ from you and the Council, that you would ever have
 “ given your orders in so afflicting a manner, in which you
 “ never before wrote, and which I could not have ima-
 “ gined. As I am resolved to obey your orders and
 “ directions of the Council without any delay, as long
 “ as I live, I have, agreeable to those orders, delivered up
 “ all my private papers to him (the Resident) that when
 “ he shall have examined my receipts and expences, he may
 “ take whatever remains. As I know it to be my duty,
 “ to satisfy you, the Company, and the Council, I have
 “ not failed to obey in any instance; but requested of him
 “ that it might be done, so as not to distress me in my neces-
 “ sary expences. There being no other funds but those for
 “ the expences of my Mutseddies, household expences and
 “ servants, &c. he demanded these in such a manner, that,
 “ being remediless, I was obliged to comply with what
 “ he required. He has accordingly stopped the pensions
 “ of my old servants for 30 years, whether Sepoys, Mut-
 “ seddies, or household servants; and the expences of my
 “ family and kitchen, together with the jaghiers of my
 “ grandmother, mother, and aunts, and of my brothers and
 “ dependents, which were for their support.”

Translation of a letter from the Nabob Asoph ul Dowlah to Mr. C. Purling; delivered for translation 15th May 1780; as entered on the Bengal Secret Consultations of the 22d June 1780*.

“ I have received your letter—you write, that you
 “ informed the Council in the month of Maug, that I
 “ had not sources in my country, and my expences
 “ were very great; and that you have received an
 “ answer from the Council, that whatever balance was
 “ due at the end of the year, I should pay; and that
 “ the sum 1,06,62,000 Rs, which were granted as af-
 “ fets, should suffer no diminution. Nor will the gen-
 “ tlemen of the Council allow one rupee; but that
 “ agreeable to the account particulars, the balance of
 “ 1,36,62,188. 12. must be assigned.

“ I have in no respect failed in my compliance with
 “ the pleasure of the Council, or my friendship for the
 “ Company, as far as I have had ability; and I have
 “ acquainted you very fully with the state of my
 “ country, and the sources of the revenue; and I have
 “ even put a stop to the expences of my table, and the
 “ animals which I ought to keep; and the jagheers of
 “ my servants and attendants; and there are affets of
 “ 98,98,375. After this, I wrote the jagheers of my
 “ grandmother and my mother, and of the Nabob
 “ Sallar Jung, and of my family, and the sons of my
 “ uncle Mirza Ally Khawn, which were granted them
 “ for

* A translation of this letter is also inserted in the Bengal Persian Correspondence, which, as it differs in some parts from this translation, is inserted in the Appendix, No. 22.

“ for their livelihood, and they amounted to the sum
 “ of 7,63,625 Rs. By this means has the business
 “ been done. But they all possess engagements, and I
 “ have made over in assignment, the expences of
 “ my table, which I have put a stop to with this view,
 “ that the gentlemen of the Council, understanding my
 “ distressed situation, would shew me their friendship.
 “ I at first opposed the assigning the jagheers of my
 “ grandmother and mother, and my uncle; now that
 “ the Council have, upon such a representation of my
 “ distress, written that there shall not be less assign-
 “ ments that 1,06,62,000 Rs, and that the balance of
 “ 1,36,62,188 must be given, I am acquainted with
 “ the particulars of the 1,36,62,188. If the gentle-
 “ men of the Council, or you, Sir, will inform your-
 “ selves from the accounts, you will find it is not to
 “ be obtained: Whatever in justice can be obtained
 “ from the accounts, have been granted; but at this
 “ time assignments are demanded of me. The business
 “ of the world is easy, and passes away, and the gentle-
 “ men of the Council should, in every thing that is just,
 “ be my guardians and my friends: I do not put my
 “ life in competition with friendship. Whatever affects
 “ were in the country, with even my table, my ani-
 “ mals, the jagheers of my servants and attendants, are
 “ granted in assignments, amounting to 98,98,375 Rs.
 “ Besides these, the jagheers of my grandmother, mo-
 “ ther, and my uncle, the Nabobs Mirza, Allee and
 “ Sallar Jung, which were granted them for their
 “ maintenance, are at your disposal; if the Council
 “ have directed you to attach them, do it; in the
 “ country no further sources remain, and I have
 “ no means, for I have not a subsistence. Alas! I
 “ have elephants, horses, and houses; if they will serve
 “ the

" the purpose of my friends, they are ready for them.
 " The country and the aumils are at hand ; wherever
 " affets can be found, take them, I do not oppose it ;
 " in this situation I am in want of daily subsistence ; I
 " feed upon the hope and expectation of tranquility ;
 " upon this the Council's order is arrived. Whatever
 " proceeds from friendship is good ; my situation is no
 " way concealed ; how long shall I dwell upon my
 " misfortunes ? I have written sufficient."

It

It appears from these letters, that in the year 1780 demands were made on the Vizier to a most enormous amount (upwards of £. 1,400,000); and upon his inability to satisfy these demands from any other resource, assignments were demanded upon the jaghires of his family.

These letters establish one very important fact, namely, that in May 1780 the Vizier then was so far from soliciting the consent of the Governor General and Council to resume the jaghires of his mother, grandmother, and uncle, that he strongly remonstrated against the measure; and represented, that he had stopped his very household expences, together with the jaghires of his servants and dependents, and assigned them to the use of the Company. He informed the Resident, Mr. Purling, that as to the jaghires of his mother, grandmother, and uncle, which were granted to them for their support, and agreeable to engagements, the English were the masters; that if the Council have sent home orders for the stopping their jaghires also, he might stop them.

Your Committee find, that either the Nabob's letters, or the Resident's representations to the Governor General and Council, had so much influence, as to induce them to direct that the assignments received from the Vizier on the jagheers for the year 1780, should be returned by the Resident; but it is worthy of remark, that when assignments were demanded of the Vizier in 1780, that no complaints were then made against the power of the jagherders, nor no accusations then appear against the Begums, although in 1781 they are charged with having given frequent disturbance to the Nabob's government.

Your Committee consider the general resumption of the jaghires, which was resolved on at Benares, not as the measure of the Vizier, but as the act of the Governor General. It is impossible to peruse the Vizier's letters, without perceiving the absolute dependence of his situation ; yet in that dependant state, in the preceding year, he had strongly marked his repugnance to the measure. No motives appear why he should have altered his opinion ; for the excess of revenue expected to arise from the resumption was to be applied to the discharge of the debt due to the Company. Even after the meeting at Chunargar in 1781, when the Vizier had removed from the Governor General, and resided at his capital amongst his own family and friends, he shewed great reluctance to enter upon the execution of this measure.—Your Committee are not surprized at such reluctance—The resumption was an act severe and unjust to parents and relations, servants and dependants ; highly disgraceful to the distinguished house from which he descended ; and very injurious to his own honour, so solemnly and so sacredly pledged. Part of the disgrace and obloquy resulting from the execution, he was to bear ; whilst the English Company was to reap, and actually do receive the revenues (under the plea of liquidating debts) arising from such a breach of moral obligation to some, and violation of treaty to others.

Your Committee observe, that in a letter of the Resident Middleton to the Council General, he wishes them to interfere their influence to prevent the Nabob from doing an act which must inevitably bring disgrace upon himself, and a proportionate degree of discredit upon the national character of the English, which he considered to be more or less concerned in every act of his (the Nabob's) administration. The Resident is
ordered

ordered by the Governor General to repeat his remonstrances to the Nabob, to prevent the act of oppression; and to represent to him the consequences of such an arbitrary proceeding, and the reproaches to which his honour and reputation, as well as ours from being concerned with him, will be exposed by such acts of cruelty and injustice; and the right which we derive, from the nature of our alliance with him, to expect that he will pay a deference to our remonstrances.

And your Committee must here observe, that this was the language of 1778. The Governor General and Council of Bengal did not then pretend to exercise that entire command and controul over the Vizier, which they have since so openly and so avowedly assumed. Yet even at this period it appears, that if the Nabob Vizier committed an act of injustice, it was thought that the disgrace attendant upon such an act would expose the English name to reproach. Mr. Middleton, the Resident at the Court of Oude, was certainly in a situation to form a competent judgment of the extent of the British influence, and the consequences resulting from the exercise of it; and he declared, that he considered the national character to be more or less concerned in every act of the Nabob's administration. If this was his opinion at that period, how much more forcibly does it apply after September 1781, when the Governor General throws aside all reserve, and by his instructions to Mr. Middleton, controuls and absolutely limits the power and authority of the Nabob Vizier, as he would have done that of a refractory and dependant Zemindar. Your Committee are of opinion, that a general resumption of jagheers, was a measure which has rendered the English name odious and detestable, as it deprived many of the ancient nobility, officers of rank,

and dependants of the court of their estates. Some information of the extent of this oppressive measure may be seen in the account of their jaghires, their value when granted, and by whom possessed : These papers are inserted in the Appendix. And it is an aggravation of distress to the unhappy sufferers, that those who advised this cruel and unjust measure, are now in possession of their estates, whilst they themselves are not only deprived of their subsistence, but many of them must be reduced from a state of affluence and comfort, to poverty and want ; for, excepting those jaghires which were guaranteed by the Company, it does not appear that any provision whatsoever was thought of for the other jaghiredars ; and how far the public faith will be kept, even to those guaranteed by the Company, is yet doubtful. The Resident (Mr. Middleton) has stated his objections against any equivalent being given to the Nabob Salar Jung, uncle to the Vizier, for the jaghire of which he has been deprived by us.

Your Committee have given a decided opinion upon this resumption. But whether it was the act of the Vizier, or the act of the Governor General, the effect is the same : If it was the act of the former, the English honour and reputation was now much more subject to reproach, from any cruel or unjust proceedings of the Vizier than in 1778 ; because the Governor General and Council have now assumed the supreme authority throughout his dominions ; and if they then claimed a right, from the nature of their alliance with him, to expect that he would pay a deference to their remonstrances, they now exercised a power that left the Nabob no alternative : but your Committee find no remonstrance made by the Governor General in favour of all those opulent and ancient families, who, under that
 extensive

extensive Government, enjoyed jaghires and grants of lands, whether as remunerations for services actually performed, or given as a provision for the proper maintenance of the relations of the Prince. On the contrary, your Committee find that the Governor General allows the Nabob not only to resume such jaghires as he may find necessary (with a reserve concerning those guaranteed by the Company) but forgetting his former declaration of what was due to our national character, as connected with that of the Vizier, he now declares, "That as we are neither engaged for their possessions, nor have any immediate connection with them, the Nabob should be left to the exercise of his own authority and pleasure respecting them."

Your Committee cannot help observing, that if any formal representation had been made by the Vizier, our ally, to the Governor General, the representative of the British nation, containing matter of complaint against his Mother, whom we were bound by treaty to protect whilst her conduct did not forfeit that protection, it was his duty, in the first instance, to have entered into a minute investigation of this matter, and communicated to the Council General the result of his enquiries: and if any real cause had been given by the Begums for resentment on the part of the Nabob (which, by the evidence before your Committee, is very far from being proved) your Committee think that the honour and dignity of this nation, so much tarnished by the late violent proceedings against the Rajah of Benares, ought on this occasion to have had its full weight and influence on the Governor General's conduct; and if he ventured to enter upon any decisive measures without the sanction of his council, it became
a duty

a duty still more incumbent in him to consult what was due to that honour and to that dignity; he should not have permitted the English nation to have appeared at the Court of Oude in the degrading light of a party highly interested in that decision where their own will was law; but in the more honourable and just character of a mediator for peace and reconciliation between the Sovereign and his Mother, the ally of the one, and the guarantee to the other.

But the Governor General appears to your Committee totally to have forgot the character of guarantee; for, after consenting to deprive the Begum of the possession of her estates, which were guaranteed to her by the Company, he soon after strenuously encouraged the Vizier to seize the wealth of his Mother and Grandmother, because he "thought it equally unjust and
"impolitic that they (the Begums) should be allowed
"to retain the means, of which (he states) they had
"already made so pernicious an use, by exciting dis-
"turbances in the country, and revolting against the
"Nabob their Sovereign."

He adds, "I am not too sanguine in my expectations of the result of these proceedings; but have
"required and received the Nabob's promise, that
"whatever acquisitions shall be obtained from the
"issue of them, it shall be primarily applied to the
"discharge of the balance actually due from him to
"the Company."

What your Committee consider as the third head of charge against the Begums, is, their hatred to our nation, which, it is alledged, they carried to such an extreme as to aim at our utter extirpation.

Your Committee do not find this charge supported by any substantial proof: But in this, as in the preceding

ceding article, the Governor General states his accusation generally, and leaves the India Company to search for the particulars in the numerous affidavits he has transmitted for that purpose: On those affidavits your Committee have already made some observations; in which it appears that the Begums could not entertain the least hope of success from any junction of their interest with the Zemindar of Benares: For had they been really disposed to aim at our utter extirpation from India, our power was too well established in that quarter to be shaken by any measures which could be planned, adopted, or executed by helpless women or intriguing eunuchs; and the late transactions at Faizabad are full proof that this opinion is justly founded.

With respect to the charge of hatred to our nation, it appears to your Committee, that even were this to be admitted as a fact, yet, considering it unconnected with any other charge, it could not possibly have warranted the measures which have been pursued against them.

But your Committee cannot discover, except from the common reports which are mentioned in the affidavits, the least trace of enmity to our nation prior to the order for seizing the Begums estates; and even after that order was carried into execution, the Resident's letters do not convey any intelligence of their being inimical to our nation; though he says, indeed, that troops were raised by their directions, as it should appear, to resist the Nabob's orders. Nor does it seem a *proof of deadly hatred, or of a fixed, steady, and determinate plan, formed for our utter extirpation, that on the appearance of a single regiment of Sepoys all opposition ceased.*

It would not have been a matter of surprize to your Committee, if in this investigation the Begums had appeared inimical to our nation; for, considering the rank and characters of these women, the stile and manner in which they lived in the days of the former Vizier, Sujah Dowlah, totally independent of all controul from the English Government, and comparing their then situation to the miserable and dependent state to which they have been since reduced, and that too by the improper exertion of British power and influence, it is to be feared, that they do now entertain (whatever might have been their former opinions) sentiments of rooted animosity against the authors of their disgrace and misfortunes.

It remains with this House to decide, whether the plea of distress in the East India Company's affairs is an excuse for those persons in India who are invested with the authority of the State, and who have committed those acts, so derogatory to our national character: But your Committee cannot help observing, that if this principle was to be admitted, no power nor no subject in India could be secure from the violence and injustice of our Governors in India; they might do again, what this House has already declared they have done, involve the Company in unnecessary wars; and upon the failure of internal resources, they may have recourse, according to the principles and practice of the Governor General, to external means for immediate relief or support in the prosecution of those wars, and then plead that distress which, by their own bad policy, they have brought on the Company's affairs, as an excuse for "adopting extraordinary means, and "executing them with a strong hand, to save the
" Company's

"Company's interests from sinking under the accumulated weight which oppresses them."

The Governor General, in his Narrative, states it possible, that a suspicion might arise that he was influenced, in his proceedings against Cheyt Sing, the Rajah of Benares, by a secret and mercenary interest. Your Committee, on this point, have no documents before them on which they can ground an observation: But in the transactions with the Vizier they have documents, which it is their duty to state to the House.

"I am now in the sixth year of my life. I have passed thirty-one years in the service of the Company, and the greatest part of that time in employment of the highest trust. My conscience allows me boldly to claim the test of zeal and integrity: nor has fortune been unpropitious to my exertions. To these qualities I joined my possessions. I shall and reward of my labours, and I wish to devote them to your service."

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On the 20th of January 1782, the Governor General writes from Patna to the Court of Directors the following letter :

“ While the Nabob Vizier was at Chunar, an offer
 “ was made to me, both on his part and on that of
 “ his Ministers, as a present—I accepted it without
 “ hesitation, and gladly, being entirely destitute both
 “ of means and credit, whether for your service, or
 “ the relief of my own necessities. This donation
 “ was not made in specie, but in bills, which have
 “ been in part only, and tardily realized, being drawn
 “ on the House of Gopal Doss, who was at the time
 “ a prisoner in the hands of Cheyt Sing.—The re-
 “ mainder is in course of payment, and I make no
 “ doubt of its being paid. What I have received has
 “ been laid out on the public service : The rest shall
 “ be applied to the same account. The nominal sum
 “ is ten lacks of rupees, of the currency of Oude.
 “ As soon as the whole is completed, I will transmit
 “ to you a faithful account of it, resigning the dis-
 “ posal of it entirely to the pleasure of your honourable
 “ Court. If you shall adjudge the deposit to me, I
 “ shall consider it as the most honourable approbation
 “ and reward of my labours ; and I wish to owe my
 “ fortune to your bounty.

“ I am now in the fiftieth year of my life ; I have
 “ passed thirty-one years in the service of the Com-
 “ pany, and the greatest part of that time in employ-
 “ ments of the highest trust. My conscience allows
 “ me boldly to claim the merit of zeal and integrity ;
 “ nor has fortune been unpropitious to their exertions.
 “ To these qualities I found my pretensions. I shall
 “ not

" not repine if you shall deem otherwise of my ser-
 " vices; nor ought your decision, however it disap-
 " points my hope of a retreat adequate to consequence
 " and elevation of the office which I now possess, to
 " lessen my gratitude for having been so long per-
 " mitted to hold it; since it has at last enabled me to
 " lay up a provision with which I can be content in a
 " more humble station.

" I have the honour to be,

" Honourable Sirs;

" your most faithful, and

" most obedient servant,

" Warren Hastings."

Your Committee must observe, that there are some very extraordinary circumstances which attend this transaction.

The Vizier took leave of the Governor General the 25th of September; but the date of this letter to the Company is near four months after his departure, and only eight days after the English Resident had, by a military force, taken possession of the Begum's palace and treasure.

In a matter of this nature, solely relating to the Governor General's private interest, and in breach of a positive Act of Parliament, he ought to have been peculiarly attentive that the first conveyance should have apprised the Council General at Calcutta of his proceedings, that those proceedings might have been recorded on their consultations, and transmitted to the East India Company by the first dispatch: but so far from observing this line of conduct, your Committee do not find that any entry whatever is made of it in the Company's Journals abroad; neither is it made a subject of their general letter to the Company; but the Governor General gives them information of this present in a separate letter from himself, addressed to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, and not transmitted to them by the usual channel, but delivered to them by Major Scott, his agent.

When your Committee found that presents to such an amount had been made, they thought it fit to examine into the ability and free will of the donor; and for that purpose they perused the letters of the Nabob of Oude to the Governor General, wrote in 1779, (Appendix, No. 7,) wherein he states, "That for
" three years past, from the great expence of brigades
" and battalions under the charge of English gentle-
" men,

“ men, he has been reduced to such distress, that his
 “ own private affairs in the Dooab (or country be-
 “ tween the Ganges and Jumna) were gone to ruin,
 “ and were come to such a state, that the women of
 “ the late Nabob, his Father, whom he considered as
 “ his Mothers, and to whom, with their children, he
 “ had granted only the fourth part of their former ap-
 “ pointments, had received nothing for two years,
 “ and were almost famished.” After stating his in-
 ability to pay his debts, and having patiently submitted
 to all his afflictions, he hopes that they would be made
 known to the Council from some other quarter. He
 adds, that he has now no other remedy, as, from the
 encrease of his expences, the country has been put to a
 rack rent, balances have every year remained, and the
 country is near going to ruin. And he concludes this
 remarkable letter with these words: “ As I neither
 “ am, nor ever was, deficient, as far as my income,
 “ country, and very life would go, in my endeavours
 “ to give a satisfaction to the Company, to you, and
 “ the Gentlemen of the Council, it is therefore equally
 “ incumbent on the Gentlemen to do justice in this
 “ matter, and remove the afflictions from me, that I
 “ may not be distressed for the support of my un-
 “ avoidable expences.”

And even so late as June 1781, only one month
 before the Governor General left Calcutta to proceed
 to Benares, your Committee observe, that the Vizier
 has thus described the wretched state of his finances,
 in a letter addressed to Mr. Middleton:

“ From what has passed and happened, I apprehend
 “ that you have not fully explained all the particulars
 “ of my situation to the Nabob, and the Gentlemen
 “ of the Council. I am reduced to such a state, that,
 “ from

“ from the greatness of my distresses, and the small-
 “ ness of my resources, I am unable to take care of
 “ my family ; and, notwithstanding this, orders come
 “ from thence for new battalions to be raised. It is
 “ incumbent on your friendship to me, and piety to
 “ the Almighty, to write in a proper manner all the
 “ particulars of my situation to the Nabob, and the
 “ Gentlemen of the Council, that, when they shall
 “ have discovered my distresses, they may take com-
 “ passion on my condition, and excuse me from these
 “ additional difficulties, and that I may thus be re-
 “ stored to ease, and may be no longer distressed for
 “ my necessary expences.”

And on the 1st May 1781 your Committee ob-
 serve the Governor General states, that the Province
 of Oude had fallen into a state of great disorder and
 confusion, and that its resources had in an extra-
 ordinary degree diminished ; and therefore proposed to
 visit the Province of Oude, in hopes that from a
 minute and personal observation of the circumstances
 of that country, the system of management which has
 been adopted, and of the characters and conduct of
 the persons employed, he might possibly be able to
 concert and establish some plan, by which the Pro-
 vince of Oude may in time be restored to its former
 state of affluence, good order, and propriety.

Your Committee will add the Governor General's
 own opinion of the Vizier's situation.

“ The treaty which was concluded with the Nabob
 “ Sujah Dowlah placed him on the most respectable
 “ footing, as the Sovereign of an independent State,
 “ and left all his rights untouched, with a provision
 “ for their security against all eventual encroachments
 “ upon them ; and the duration of his alliance de-
 “ pended

“ pended yet more upon the reciprocal and equal
 “ advantages which it held out to both parties, than
 “ on the formality of a written compact. This treaty
 “ was broken at his death, and a new one, constructed
 “ on far different principles, was made with his Son
 “ and successor, by which the latter eventually and
 “ necessarily became *a vassal of the Company*, and their
 “ interest bound by such strong and intricate ties, as
 “ must render it dangerous at any time to separate
 “ them, and fatal to both at such a time as this.”

Your Committee have already stated, that the
 Council General of Calcutta declare to the Company,
 that “ the necessities of the Vizier’s Government re-
 “ quiring extraordinary aid, he (the Vizier) resolved
 “ to take this occasion of depriving the Begums of
 “ their extensive jaghires.”

Your Committee beg leave particularly to call the
 attention of the House to this point—When the Go-
 vernor General gives his immediate acquiescence to
 the Vizier, for the indiscriminate resumption of all
 jaghires (stipulating only for the net amount to be
 paid to those who were guaranteed by the Company)
 and when the exigencies of the State were so pressing,
 as to require extraordinary aid, and in consequence
 extraordinary measures were adopted to obtain that
 aid; and whilst the Vizier was indebted to the English
 Company in seventy-five lacks of rupees (to obtain
 payment of which was one of the declared objects of
 his interview with the Vizier); it appears a most ex-
 traordinary proceeding, to your Committee, that this
 should be the precise time for the Governor General to
 disobey an Act of Parliament, which positively forbids
 him to accept any present whatsoever, directly or in-
 directly,

directly, by accepting a present of ten lacks of rupees from the Vizier and his Ministers.

The Governor General states, that the offer was made to him, both on the part of the Nabob and that of his Ministers.

Your Committee must refer the House to the Governor General's letter of instructions to the English Resident at Lucknow, dated the 23d of September, nearly the period when he received this present. It has already been shewn, that those instructions deprived the Nabob of all power in his own dominions, and even limited his own personal expences; the remainder of his revenue was put under the sole management and controul of the Nabob's Minister, with the concurrence of the Resident.

It appears to your Committee, that this gift was made by a Prince who was actually deprived of the power to be generous, to him who had thus deprived him of that power; that it was given by those Ministers who were authorized to controul the acts of their Sovereign, to him whose influence and authority protected them in the possession of their high offices and dignities.

And in order to shew the House the effect of the prohibitory law which became of force in 1774, your Committee will here insert extracts from the Governor General's letter of the 31st of August 1774, to Colonel Champion, at that time Commander in Chief in Bengal. It will be just necessary to premise, that in the beginning of that year, the Vizier Sujah Dowlah having conquered the Rohilla country by the operations of the British army, and being desirous to testify his gratitude to the Commander in Chief, and to that army, he made them a present of ten lacks of rupees.

Colonel

Colonel Champion would not, nor indeed could he, permit the army to receive this donation for past services, without the permission of the Governor and Council of Calcutta, and the Governor and Council consented to give their sanction to the Vizier's donation, and to empower the troops to receive it; but, on consulting the new Act of Parliament, the Governor General says, " I was much disappointed, and sorry to find, that our intentions were entirely defeated by a clause in the Act, to be in force after the 1st of August 1774, which deprives us of the power to grant, and expressly prohibits the army to receive, the Nabob's intended donation. Agreeable to the positive sense of this clause, notwithstanding it is expressed *individually*, there is not a doubt but that the army is included, with all other persons, in the prohibition of receiving presents and donations; a confirmation of which is, that by the clause of exceptions, counsellors at law, physicians, surgeons, and chaplains, are permitted to receive the fees annexed to their professions, but no mention whatever is made of any latitude given to the army, or any circumstances wherein it would be allowable for them to receive presents. This unlucky discovery of an exclusion by an Act of Parliament, which admits of *no abatement or evasion wherever its authority extends*, renders a revival of our proceedings necessary, and leaves no option to our decision. It is not like the ordinances of the Court of Directors, where a favourable construction may be put, and some room is left for the interposition of the authority vested in ourselves; but *positive and decisive, admitting neither of refinement or misconstruction*. I should be happy if, in this instance, a method could be devised of setting the Act

M

" aside,

*“ aside, which I should most willingly embrace ; but in
 “ my opinion, an opposition would be to incur the
 “ penalty.”*

This was the opinion of the Governor General, Mr. Hastings, of the force of that act in 1774; and here it is proper to remark, that such reverence was then thought due to an act of parliament, and so rigidly was it then observed, that it operated in this case as an *ex post facto* law. The present was made to the army in May or June; but the Governor and Council's consent had not been given for the acceptance of it before the first of August, the day on which the new law was to take effect; so that although the present had been made some months before the time fixed for the operation of the law, yet it was deemed more consistent with the letter of the law, to deprive the army of their reward for great, important, and successful services, which they had rendered to the Vizier, than infringe or evade this new Act of Parliament.

The reason assigned by the Governor General, for his acceptance of this present, is worthy of observation:
*“ I accepted it without hesitation, and gladly, being
 “ entirely destitute both of means and credit, whether
 “ for your service, or the relief of my necessities. This
 “ donation was not made in specie, but in bills, which
 “ have been in part only, and tardily realized, being
 “ drawn on the house of Gopaul Doss, who was at
 “ that time a prisoner in the hands of Cheyt Sing.”*

Your Committee will examine how far the acceptance of this present, contrary to a positive Act of Parliament, did actually operate to the relief of the public service.

It appears by the Governor General's Narrative, that he was in distress for money for the public service, from the 20th August, when he retreated from Benares to

Chunar

Chunar, until the 13th September, when Major Roberts arrived with his regiment from Lucknow, and brought 1,00,000 rupees in silver, and a few days afterwards, a further supply of 50,000 rupees was received from the Nabob's office at Allahabad.

The Governor General states, that this money was immediately distributed amongst all the troops, in equal proportions ; and by satisfying their wants, facilitated Major Popham's preparations for the commencement of active operations.

The Vizier and the Governor General met on the 11th September ; they separated on the 25th. It is not stated on what day this present was made ; but the Governor General's letter mentions that it was in bills drawn upon a banker, at that period a prisoner with the enemy. His letter is dated four months after it was given ; and it is then stated, that these bills were in part only, and tardily realized.

No distribution is stated to have been made to the army of any part of the Vizier's present to the Governor General. Your Committee conclude from this, and from the delay in realizing it, that no payments were immediately made from that fund to the army. The Governor General has done justice to the good behaviour of the Seapoys, by declaring, that " distressed " as they had been for money, they never manifested " the least symptom of discontent."

It appears by the Supplement to the Second Report, that our troops took the field the 15th September, and that Cheyt Sing's forces had been so completely defeated at Lora and Pateetah, that the Governor General states the allegiance of the whole country restored as completely, in the course of a few hours, from a state of

universal revolt to its proper channel, as if it had never departed from it.

It appears that Major Balfour, on the 23d September, had regained possession of Benares, which is one of the most opulent cities of the East; and the Governor General returned to his old quarters there on the 28th.

From the time we again recovered the possession of this city, all immediate difficulties concerning money ceased. The Governor General says, "when I returned to Benares, Beneram Pundit renewed the same tender; and although my distress for money was not then equal in any degree to that which had before prompted him to make it, I agreed to accept it; willing to furnish an incontrovertible proof of his sincerity in the first offer." Accordingly he received 1,00,000 rupees from him, and granted a note for the amount (in the name of the Company.) This sum had been offered as a Loan, immediately on the Governor General's retreat to Chunar; but safe means could not be found to convey this money from that City, then under the enemy's command. It appears, that in the beginning of October, the communication was open to Patna; and supplies of money, if necessary, might have been sent, under a proper escort, from the Bahar Province to Benares.

On the arrival of the Nabob Vizier and his Minister Hyder Beg at Chunar, the Governor General had good ground to require their immediate pecuniary assistance; for it appears, that the Vizier was then indebted to the Company upwards of 750,000l. and it does not appear to your Committee, that the Vizier or his Minister did at this period discharge any part of this enormous debt; although "the adjustment of the mutual concerns sub-

" sitting

“ sitting between him (the Vizier) and the Company, “ and authority to enforce the same,” formed a part of the Governor General’s instructions.

And here your Committee must remark, that they cannot see the propriety of his introducing this gift to the notice of the Company, as fixed to this particular period; for if the Governor General was destitute both of means and credit for the public service, or the relief of his own necessities, this gift did not, nor could not produce instant relief from an immediate pressure, as it was made in bills drawn on a banker at that period a prisoner with the enemy. Four months after the present was made, it appears to have been only in part, and tardily realized. Possibly before the gift was made, but certainly within ten days after, we were in possession of Benares, where ample supplies for so small a detachment might have been obtained. But even if the money had been actually received at the time when it might have been of the most service, your Committee conceive it will not require any great force of reasoning to prove, that whatever payments were made by the Vizier to the Governor General, on account of his debt to the Company, would have operated to the relief of the public service, at least as effectually as by a present made to Mr. Hastings.

The Governor General has stated, “ What I have “ received has been laid out in the public service; “ the rest shall be applied to the same account.”

Your Committee observe, that the present was made betwixt the 11th and 25th September 1781; the latest advices from Bengal are in April 1782; to that period, no record appears at the India-House, by which credit has been given to the Company for any part of it, nor any account to have been transmitted to the Directors concerning

concerning it. They will add, that the estimate of the probable receipts in Bengal, from March 1782 to February 1783, is before your Committee, and entered in the Appendix No. 9; but neither the whole sum, nor any part of it, is included in that estimate.

Your Committee must remark, that the regulating Act of the 13th George III. which prohibits the servants of the Company from receiving presents from Indian Princes, their agents, or natives of Asia, does not grant any power to the India Company to dispense with that prohibition. The acceptance therefore of presents, with a reference to the Court of Directors for their approbation, cannot make that acceptance less illegal, as the consent of the Directors would be no justification of the act.

Your committee deemed it necessary to examine what has been the conduct of the Directors, upon this reference to them. Their instructions to Bengal, of the 15th January 1783, are as follow:

Extract of the Company's General Letter to Bengal ;
dated the 15th January 1783.

“ Par 54. We have received a letter from our Governor General, dated Patna, 20th January 1782, representing, That while the Nabob Vizier was at Chunar, an offer of a very considerable sum of money was made to him, both on the part of the Nabob and on that of his Ministers, as a present ; which he accepted without hesitation, being entirely destitute both of means and credit, whether for our service or the relief of his own necessities. The nominal sum said to be received, and in course of payment, amounts, as the Governor General has informed us, to ten lacks of rupees, of the currency of Oude. It is further stated, that what has been already received, has been laid out on the public service, and that the rest is to be applied to the same account ; and that as soon as the whole is compleated, he will transmit to us a faithful account thereof.”

“ The Governor General has submitted to our consideration, whether we will adjudge this deposit to him ; but as the act of parliament, by which the Governor General and Council were appointed, directs, “ That the salaries to be allowed to the said Governor General and Council, as therein mentioned, shall be in lieu of all fees of office, perquisites, emoluments, and advantages whatsoever ; and that no fees of office, perquisites, emoluments, or advantages whatsoever, shall be accepted, received, or taken, by such Governor General and Council, or any of them, in any manner, or on any account or
“ pretence

" pretence whatsoever : " And the same act further di-
 rects, " That no Governor General, or any of the
 " Council, shall, directly or indirectly, accept, receive,
 " or take, of or from any person or persons, in any man-
 " ner, or on any account whatsoever, any present, gift,
 " donation, gratuity or reward, pecuniary or otherwise,
 " or any promise or engagement for any present, gift,
 " donation, gratuity, or reward : " We cannot, were
 " we so inclined, decree the amount of this present to
 " the Governor General. And as it further enacted,
 " That any such present, gift, gratuity, donation, or
 " reward, accepted, taken, or received, shall be deem-
 " ed and constructed to have been received to and for
 " the use of the Company, " we approve of the inten-
 " tions of the Governor General, to appropriate the
 " whole of this sum to the public service ; and direct,
 " that he do strictly abide by the Act of Parliament in
 " this case made and provided. "

It appears that the Directors received advice, on the 25th July 1782, that the Vizier and his Ministers had made this present of ten lacks of rupees to the Governor General, and of his acceptance of the offer. They knew a part of it had been received, and that the whole was in the course of payment; and the first order which they send to India is the 15th January 1783, to take this present for the use of the Company.

It is now near twelve months since they received the intelligence; and no further orders are sent on this subject.

Your Committee must observe, that when references are made to the Court of Directors, of cases in which the violation of public faith, or the oppression of individuals, are clear beyond contradiction; yet if the Company is to be a considerable gainer by the transaction, the interest of their constituents, the Proprietors of India Stock, and perhaps their own particular views to secure an interest amongst those proprietors for their future re-election, have been too apt to bias the opinion of the Directors, where, in justice, they ought to have decided against any immediate advantage being derived to the Company.

And your Committee conceive the decision on, and the application of, the present made by the Vizier to Mr. Hastings, is a direct proof in point; and if the reduced state of the Vizier's finances, with the increased demands of the Company on him, be taken into consideration, your Committee cannot but report that such an order appears to them very unjust.

The Governor General, in case of the Rohilla prize money, has given a decided opinion of that clause of the act which prohibits the receiving of presents; he says " it admits of no abatement or evasion wherever

“ its authority extends, but that it is positive and decisive, admitting neither of refinement or misconstruction.” With such clear ideas on this subject, your Committee are surprized, that the first officer of government, so remote from the seat of empire, should, in his own act and for his own peculiar emolument, set such an example of disobedience to the laws of his country. When these facts become known in India, it is to be feared, that the servants of the Company will be inclined to lessen their reverence and respect to those acts of parliament which were made to restrain them in the pursuit of wealth; and that they will be apt to reconcile to their own minds, any deviation from strict obedience, by quoting the example of the Governor General, as a rule by which they may guide their own conduct.

Major Fairfax was particularly recommended by the Governor General to the Court of Directors, as an intelligent officer, who could give them information concerning the commotions in the upper provinces; he was therefore called before your Committee, and the evidence he has given will be found in the Appendix; but your Committee must remark, that his evidence of the execution of the two Eunuchs, Jewhar and Bahar Ally Cawn, is totally without foundation; as by Mr. Middleton's letter of the 3d February 1782, it appears that these two Eunuchs, instead of being executed for high treason, are still in being, and of so much consequence as to be accepted by the English Resident as security for the payment of a bond granted by the Nabob to the Company for the payment of upwards of 125,000l.

Your Committee have entered in the Appendix to this Report, the resolution of the Council General, of the 3d of July; which grants a power to the Governor
General

General to issue what orders he shall think proper to the troops stationed beyond the provinces, as well as in the dominions of the Nabob Vizier; and that his single authority shall be considered and received as of the same force as that of the Governor General and Council collectively, until that resolution should be revoked. Orders in consequence were communicated to the Commander in Chief in Bengal, to be published by him in general orders to the army.

To enable the House to form a judgment, whether the Council General could grant such authority to the Governor General, your Committee have entered the articles of the instructions sent by the Court of Directors to Bengal in the year 1774 and 1778, when the line was drawn and fixed; and which described the extent of the military power of the Governor General, and the Commander in Chief of the forces.

By these instructions it appears, that the Governor General was positively restrained from the exercise of any military power whatsoever, beyond the garrison and fortrefs of Fort William; so that the delegation and exercise of all military power and authority beyond the limits so described, was a direct and positive disobedience of the orders of the Court of Directors.

Disobedience of orders, on a point, so delicate and important as that of wresting the military command from the official military officer, who was invested with that authority by the orders of the Directors, might have been productive of consequences extremely prejudicial to the public service; if the Commander in Chief had asserted the right invested in himself, a contention for executive power might probably have been the consequence, and the army, which in India is so peculiarly constituted, as to require not only exact dis-

cipline, but the most perfect subordination, in order to insure obedience, must have ultimately decided where that obedience was due—that is, whether the obedience required by martial law to the Commander in Chief, could be taken from him, and transferred to the Governor General, who not bearing a military commission (unless that of Governor of Fort William is so considered) of course was not subject to martial law?

And here your Committee must remark, that if the Governor General and Council could invest the Governor General with a power to exact obedience to his orders by all the troops beyond the province, the Commander in Chief became a mere cypher; for the same power which delegated this authority to the Governor, might, if they thought proper, equally delegate it to a Member of the Council, or to any other civil servant of the Company.

It appears that Brigadier General Stibbert then commanded in chief in Bengal, but Lieutenant General Sir Eyre Coote was the Commander in Chief in India. In his letter to the Court of Directors, of the 29th January 1782, and entered in a former Report, it is stated, “ That he could not avoid remarking on the late ex-
“ cursion of the Governor General to the upper pro-
“ vinces of Bengal; and on the more extraordinary
“ and unaccountable measure of appointing himself
“ Commander in Chief of the army; and how he had
“ conducted himself in that capacity, would become
“ known to them by the accounts from Bengal.”

And your Committee observe, that in Sir Eyre Coote's letter to the Governor General and Council, of the 1st March 1781, he complains of other encroachments made by the Governor General and Council upon his authority as Commander in Chief of the forces.

forces. These representations are made in strong terms ; he says, “ I must, in justice to my own character as a
 “ soldier, and in support of those rights inseparable
 “ from the station I fill, declare such a proceeding as
 “ being highly injurious to both ; and, as I humbly
 “ conceive, assuming a privilege to yourselves in mi-
 “ litary detail, which you cannot on any good grounds
 “ be vindicated in asserting.”

In another part of the same letter, he says, “ the
 “ News-papers are replete with promotions and new
 “ arrangements in the military on the Bengal establish-
 “ ment, of which I am by appointment the immediate
 “ Commander in Chief. I need not define how far
 “ my powers rendered a reference for my approbation,
 “ if not my express sanction, necessary to such inno-
 “ vation ; nevertheless they have been framed, ap-
 “ proved, and executed without being thus qualified,
 “ are now in force without the least public report having
 “ been made me of them. I protest against the whole
 “ as irregular, unmilitary, and burthening the Ho-
 “ nourable Company with an enormous additional
 “ expence, which I am clearly satisfied there was no
 “ necessity for incurring ; and much less, at a time when
 “ the Company’s funds can so ill afford it.”

Your Committee have inserted in the Appendix, further extracts, from the letter before mentioned, as it will convey to the House the sense entertained by his Majesty’s Commander in Chief in India of the improper assumption of military power by the Governor General and Council of Bengal.

Since this Report was framed, the Company have received advices from Bengal down to December 1782. The Governor General has advised the Directors of the full receipt of the ten lacks of Rupees from the Vizier ;

Vizier ; and that he has added such other sums as have occasionally been converted to the Company's property through his means, and in consequence of the like original destination.

The Governor General says, " As to the manner " in which these sums have been expended, the references which he has made of it, in an accompanying " account, to the several accounts in which they are " credited, renders any other specification of it unnecessary ; besides that those accounts either have, or " will have, received a much stronger authentication " than any which he could give to his (accounts)."

It is the intention of your Committee, in their next Report, to lay before the House the Governor General's letters to the Court of Directors, on this subject of presents ; as also a copy of the account referred to, together with the observations of your Committee upon those letters and the account.

The Council General of Bengal held proceedings upon the Governor General's agreement with the Vizier at Benares, and upon the measures pursued in consequence. The observations of your Committee on those proceedings will be inserted in a future Report.



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